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W. Donald Thomson

THE

ECCLESIASTICAL AND MISSIONARY RECORD,

For the Presbyterian Church of Canada.

Volume II—No 7.

HAMILTON, FEBRUARY, 1816.

Price 2s. 6d. per Annum.

The Record.

The Commission of Synod is to meet, by adjournment, in Knox's Church, Toronto, on Tuesday, the 10th instant, at twelve o'clock noon.

By reference to the Acts of Synod, in our July number, it will be found that the general collection for the Home Mission Fund is appointed to be made on Sabbath, the 1st March,—the collection for the College having been made instead thereof, on the 6th December. Ministers and missionaries are respectfully requested to take notice of this appointment.

The attention of the office-bearers and members of the Church is requested to the recommendation of the Commission (see Meeting of Commission, in this number), respecting the circulation of the Record. Although its circulation is already very extensive, and has been steadily increasing from the beginning, yet, by a little effort, it might be greatly increased, and rendered much more efficient for the purposes of its establishment by the Synod. The publisher has still to complain of the remissness of some parties in regard to remittances, both on the score of arrears and of payment for these current year.

We invite the attention of the Church to the Home and Foreign missionary and ecclesiastical intelligence, which this number of the Record contains. We have given an interesting report, recently presented by Dr. Buchanan, on behalf of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, in order to show the extent of that department of their operations, and the energy and liberality with which they are conducted.

The movement on behalf of Christian Union, which has originated in Toronto, will, we doubt not, interest Christians generally throughout the Province. A notice of a course of lectures, and of a general meeting for promoting union there, will be found among our miscellaneous intelligence. We also learn, that the subject of King's College is about to be taken up, with the energy which its vast importance to the best interests of the Church and the country at large claims. A great public meeting, at which the Hon. A. Fergusson, of Woodhill, has agreed to preside, is to be held in Toronto on the 3rd instant, to give expression to the mind of the community in that quarter respecting this institution. This example will, no doubt, be followed up in other parts of the country immediately; and in a manner which so closely concerns the interests of education, and on the determination of which the preservation of the rising youth of the country from the poisonous influences of Paganism depends, we are sure the members and adherents of the Presbyterian Church will not be idle and indifferent spectators.

COMMISSION OF THE SYNOD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA.

The Commission of Synod met at Hamilton, according to appointment, on the 14th ult., when there were present—Messrs. Roger, Reid, Stark, Gale, Bayne, McKenzie, Mackintosh, Meldrum,—Ministers; and Mr. William McMillan,—Ruling Elder.

The Rev. Mr. Roger was called to the Chair—and Mr. Gale was appointed Clerk, p. 1.

The first matter of general interest that came before the Commission, was a reference from the Presbytery of Kingston, for advice respecting the reception and organization of a second congregation at Kingston, in connexion with the Synod. Together with the reference from the Presbytery, and a full explanatory letter written by the Moderator at the desire of the Presbytery, there was read a petition to the Commission signed by certain members of the Bagot Street congregation, on behalf of that body, stating that they have leased a place of worship for a term of years, and fitted it up for the accommodation of 150 sitters, that almost all the sittings have already been taken, and that the Presbytery of Kingston, having in the meantime granted them to services of the Rev. Robert Reid, recently received as a Probationer and Missionary of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, they are now prepared to give him an unanimous call, and praying that their case may be favorably considered, and disposed of as soon as possible. This document also sets forth the protracted period during which the members of this congregation have been left destitute of a fixed pastor, and the urgent need there is for the early settlement of a minister over them. After much deliberation, the Commission unananimously agreed to record their approbation of the caution and prudence which the Presbytery of Kingston have exercised in regard to this case, and to remit the whole matter to them, with authority to take whatever steps may seem to them to be most for edification in regard to the recognition and organization of the Bagot Street Congregation.

The Commission had next under consideration the report of the Committee on Calls, and after some conversation on the subject—from which it appeared that the design of the Commission, in appointing this Committee, had been to secure the compilation of a general code of discipline and order—it was resolved, that the report be recommended, and that the Rev. Geo. Smellie be added to the Committee.

The Commission then took up the remit of the Synod, respecting the lowering of the minimum amount of contribution required of congregations coming on the Sustentation Fund, under the existing provisions of that scheme—viz. £100 cy. After considerable discussion, it was moved, seconded, and carried, that it is the deliberate and matured opinion of the members present, that it is highly inexpedient, and would tend to the defeating of the scheme, to reduce the present minimum. From this finding Mr. Mackintosh dissented.

The Commission next heard the report of the publisher of the Ecclesiastical and Missionary Record of the Church, respecting the state of that publication, and agreed unanimously to record their satisfaction with the same; and earnestly recommend to all office-bearers and members of the Church to use diligence in promoting its circulation.

A draft of a model Trust Deed was presented, and it was agreed that the consideration thereof be deferred till next meeting.

Adjourned till 10th February, to meet in Knox's Church, Toronto, at noon.

SUSTENTATION BOARD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA.

This Board met at Hamilton, pursuant to adjournment, in the Brick Chapel, John Street, on the 15th ult. Present: Daniel Macnab, Esq. (in the chair); the Rev. Messrs. Stark, Gale, Bayne, and Messrs. McLaren, Osborne, Notman, McKenzie, McIntyre, and Walker. The Rev. Messrs. Roger, Reid, McKenzie, Lindsay, and Smellie, being in attendance, were invited to sit with the Board.

Mr. McIntyre reported as to the state of the fund, and stated that the quotient of 11 would be sustained in the distribution for the whole year.—It was accordingly ordered that the remaining distribution for the year be made at that rate. Mr. McIntyre intimated that, in consequence of his necessary absence from Hamilton during a great part of the ensuing season, he felt it his duty to resign the office of Treasurer to the Board. The Board then passed a vote of thanks to Mr. McIntyre for his valuable services during the past year; and proceeded to the election of another Treasurer, when W. P. McLaren, Esq., King Street, was unanimously chosen to that office.

Various members were then heard respecting the working of the scheme in various parts of the country; and having considered the statements, together with the reports of the Treasurer and Secretary,—

Resolved.—That it appears to the Board quite indispensable that an efficient agent be appointed forthwith by the Board, to visit the congregations of the Church, to explain the provisions of the scheme, and to superintend the introduction and management of it; but, inasmuch as the Rev. Mr. Bezz, of Edinburgh, is expected to visit this part of the country, from whose information and counsel much advantage would accrue, the Board agree to defer this appointment till next meeting.

Resolved 2.—That the Treasurer and Secretary be authorized and requested to prepare and print an abstract of the whole pecuniary operations of the scheme for the past year; to be circulated for the information of the congregations of the Church generally, together with such statements in explanation of the abstract and the working of the scheme as they may deem necessary.

Resolved 3.—That the following members be a Committee to make arrangements for the early visitation of the several congregations of the Church, with a view to promote the working of the scheme; viz.—the Rev. A. Gale, the Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer and Secretary, and W. Notman, Esq.

The Board then adjourned, to meet in Hamilton on the third Tuesday of April, at two o'clock, p.m.

PRESBYTERY OF HAMILTON.

This Presbytery met at Hamilton, on the 14th ult. The ministers present were—Messrs. Stark, Gale, McKenzie, Bayne, Mackintosh, Meldrum, Lindsay, Smellie, Smith, Dr. Ferner; with Mr. Roger, of Peterboro', and Mr. Reid, of Grafton, from the Presbytery of Cobourg; and Messrs. Rose, Colville, Bastedo, and Ewen, Ruling Elders. The Rev. Mr. Lindsay, of Ayr, was chosen Moderator for the ensuing six months; and the Presbytery was thereafter engaged for some time in hearing the reports of ministers, respecting the state of the missionary districts placed under their care and superintendence respectively. Much interesting information respecting the religious state of the country was communicated to the Presbytery in this way; and in connexion with the general home mission report, which was next read by the Presbytery, there took place a conversation of some length, on various points con-

acted with the Home Mission; in the course of which it was urged that a regular journal should be kept by each minister and missionary of his labours in the district assigned him; such journals to be the property of the Presbytery, and to be lodged with the Presbytery Clerk, in accordance with the suggestions of the Synod's Committee on Home Missions, we can only specify the following particulars, derived from the foregoing reports. The Rev. Mr. Meldrum stated, that in the District assigned to him, containing the two stations of Wellington Square and Waterdown, a roll of members and adherents had been made up under his superintendence, and that Mr. William Wilson had been chosen by the people at those stations as an Elder, and Messrs. Henry Graham, Edward Evans, and John Thomson Bastedo as Deacons; and the Presbytery appointed Mr. Chayne, Minister, and Mr. Bastedo, Elder, as assessors to Mr. Meldrum, in taking trial of the fitness of those parties for the duties of the offices to which they had been elected; and in the event of their finding their character and qualifications suitable, and no valid objections being offered, to proceed to their ordination, according to the laws and order of the Church.

A petition was presented, by the Rev. Mr. Chayne, from a Committee appointed by the congregation of Niagara, praying that a missionary should be steadily placed amongst them for some time; and it was resolved that application be made to the College Committee to provide, from among the more advanced students, a suitable missionary for this station, to give supply, for the present, as long as possible, and to be stationed there, at the close of the session, during the whole of the season of college.

The Rev. Mr. Lindsay gave an interesting report respecting the efforts made by the Presbytery, on and around Ingersoll, for the erection of a place of worship, and the establishment of the presence of the Gospel in that locality. A memorial, from the same parties, numerously signed, and embodying a series of resolutions to the above effect, was given in and read. The case of Ingersoll was recommended specially to the attention of the Home Missions Committee, and the superintending minister was requested to visit the station again as soon as possible. We understand that a considerable sum has already been subscribed for the erection of the church at Ingersoll, and that there is every prospect of the work being commenced in the spring. It may be mentioned, as a proof of the spirit and activity of the Presbyterians in this vicinity, that they have resolved to hold an evening social meeting, or *sairee*, in the first week of this month, in order to give an opportunity for an exposition of the principles of the Presbyterian Church. Several ministers of the Presbytery will, it is understood, be present at this meeting. Mr. Lindsay also gave an interesting report of his visit to a destitute section of the township of Brimley, where there is a large body of Presbyterian settlers, who have hitherto had but rare opportunities of enjoying the ordinances of religion, but who have, in a most commendable spirit, associated themselves for united effort in obtaining this privilege, and have formed a common fund amongst them for missionary purposes.

Mr. Mackintosh intimated that he had just returned from a missionary tour among the Owen's Sound settlements; and made various statements concerning the extent and urgent necessities of that field of missionary labour. Two memorials from the Presbyterians in that quarter were also presented; the one by Mr. Mackintosh, and the other by the Convener of the Home Missions Committee—both expressing the earnest desire of the inhabitants for a share in the services of the Presbytery's Ministers, and their willingness to contribute, to the utmost of their ability, to the Home Mission Fund. In one locality they began to contemplate the calling of a fixed pastor; and it appears that a considerable proportion of the population would require the ministrations of the Gospel in the Gaelic language. Messrs. Smellie and Meldrum are to visit this interesting field immediately, to depose the Sacrament of the Supper at Sutherland to the members of the Church, Mr. Mackintosh having been engaged, during his visit, in examining and making up a roll of members.

Written reports were given in on behalf of Messrs. McKennie, Macleiver, Foden and Graham, respecting the Missionary Districts assigned

them in the west. Some of the members having reported that they had been unable to attend their engagements to visit their Mission Districts during the last three months, were ordered to fulfil this duty forthwith.

From the general report on Home Missions, it appeared that the Rev. Dr. Ferrier had devoted a considerable portion of his services to Woodstock and London, since last meeting, and that he had also given occasional supply at Ingersoll, William and St. Thomas in the west; and at the 6th session of Ancaster, Caledonia, and Dunnville in eastern part of the Presbytery—that the Rev. John McKinnon had also been principally employed in the west, having visited Williams, St. Thomas, Aldborough, Eickel and Moss, besides giving some supply at Woodstock, Ingersoll and London—that the Rev. Mr. Bellane had steadily supplied the following stations, every third Sabbath, viz:—5th session of Ancaster and Caledonia, Oaida and Walpole, Dunnville and Wellanport—and that the Rev. Mr. Smith had regularly supplied Wellington Square and Waterdown every second Sabbath.

The Presbytery having next proceeded to take up the business on the clerk's list the demission by the Rev. Mr. McMillan of the pastoral charge at Williams came to be considered, and appearance being called for on the part of that congregation, a written communication transmitted on their behalf was read—to the effect that while they highly prized Mr. McMillan's pastoral service, and deeply regretted his removal from amongst them, they did not feel at liberty to oppose the acceptance by the Presbytery of his demission, but earnestly entreated that missionary supplies might be extended to them, in the meantime, as often as possible. Mr. McMillan's demission was then sustained by the Presbytery and he was formally loosed from the pastoral charge at Williams. The clerk next reported that he had duly communicated by circular to the General Presbyteries of the church and to the college committee the minute adopted by the Presbytery three months ago respecting the application of Dr. Ferrier, and that no objection to his reception had been made. It was therefore resolved that Dr. Ferrier be now formally received as a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Canada; and be received the right-hand of fellowship accordingly.

Two calls were then presented in favour of the Rev. John McKinnon—the one from the congregation of Williams—the other from that of St. Thomas. The presbytery having found that the calls with the relative documents had been prepared and brought forward in an orderly manner they were put into Mr. McKinnon's hands, when he intimated his intention with the concurrence of the Presbytery, to accept of the call from St. Thomas. Arrangements were then made for Mr. McKinnon's ordination, which was fixed for the 4th day of February, the Presbytery resolving to meet at St. Thomas in hunc effectum on that day. The Rev. Mr. Byne was appointed to preach and preside at the ordination, and to address the minister in English—Mr. Meldrum to preach in Gaelic, Mr. Allan to address the congregation in English and Mr. McKenzie in Gaelic.

A call was next presented from the congregation of Woodstock in favour of the Rev. Mr. McLeod of Logie Easter Ross-shire, Scotland. This call, which was numerously signed, was accompanied with a letter from a committee of the congregation, addressed to Mr. McLeod, urging in strong terms his acceptance of their call. The Presbytery after deliberation agreed to concur with this call and transmit it to the Presbytery of Tain. After arranging some other pieces of business of less general interest the Presbytery had brought before them a communication from Mr. D. McLellan, Hamilton, intimating his intention to engage in the book-selling business, with the view of promoting a more extensive circulation of books, tracts and other publications of a religious character, and especially of supplying with suitable works, congregational and Sabbath school libraries, and requesting the approval of the Presbytery to this undertaking, and the support of its members in carrying it out. The Presbytery having daily considered this communication, unanimously agreed to record their cordial approval of Mr. McLellan's undertaking and their entire confidence in his integrity and judgment in conducting the same, as also their full conviction of the great ad-

vantage which would result from the opening up to the church of a well selected supply of religious books and other publications. The members of Presbytery individually expressed their disposition to promote Mr. McLellan's object as far as possible, in their several localities. The Presbytery further taking into view the extensive and urgent want of a supply of the standard books of the church and other books and tracts suitable for the use of Sabbath schools, and for circulation among our people, resolved to appoint the following members a committee to consider and report as to the best means the Presbytery can take to advance this most desirable object, viz:—Mr. Gale, Mr. Chayne, Mr. Stark, and Mr. Ewen, Elder.

The Presbytery further authorize this committee in the meantime to give such counsel and countenance to Mr. McLellan as they may deem proper, and to recognize and recommend him as book and tract depository for the Presbytery as soon as they find that he has provided stock to justify them in acknowledging him in that capacity.

On the evening of Wednesday 14th the Rev. Dr. Ferrier preached before the Presbytery an able and interesting sermon, according to appointment from 1 Eph. iii. 10.

The Presbytery appointed their next ordinary meeting to be held at Hamilton on the 2nd Wednesday of May, at noon.

PRESBYTERY OF KINGSTON.

We are favoured, by the Rev. Henry Gordon, with the following interesting sketch of the recent proceedings of this Presbytery.

Gananoque, 19th January, 1866.

MR DEAR BROTHER,—From Mr. Smart's state of health, Mr. McLellan's resignation, and the isolated situation, at this particular season, of Ficton and Demoreaville, the pressure of Presbytery business has of late been such that I have not been able to gratify my own desires in sending regular reports, as formerly, of Presbyterial proceedings.

Our Presbytery met at Spenserville, on Tuesday, 6th instant, when the Rev. Mr. Geggie, late of Valcartiere, near Quebec, and who cast in his lot with us so soon as he knew of the disruption, was inducted to the charge of the united congregations of Spenserville, Edwardsburgh, &c. I should think that there will be seventy families of Presbyterians at least included in the charge. I preached (and presided) from Mat. vii. 13-14 v.—“Straight is the gate,” &c. Mr. Smart gave a very solemn, appropriate, and impressive address to the minister: Mr. Boyd addressed the people. There was a numerous and intensely, to all appearance, interested congregation; and the prospects, *God smiling on them*, are favourable for building up a large congregation in both Spenserville and Edwardsburgh, where convenient places of worship already are built.

On the following day (7th), Mr. MacDowall, from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, Ireland, was ordained over the congregation of South Gower.—Mr. Boyd, Present, preaching and presiding; Mr. Smart addressed the minister; Mr. Geggie to the people. According to the custom of the Presbyterian Church, Ireland, Mr. Boyd selected a text bearing on the principles of Presbyterianism, from 1st Tim. 4-14 v.—and a more luminous, energetic, conclusive, and pointed demonstration of the Scriptural foundation of the Presbyterian System of Church Government, and exposure of the inventions and corruptions of the Man of Sin, it is not easy to imagine.

There could not be less than from 400 to 450 hearers assembled, in a neat convenient place of worship. Never did any one receive a more warm, encouraging and cordial welcome at his entrance on the pastoral work or office, than this young minister. His labours for four months past have been more and more acceptable; and there is the most cheering prospect (the God of Heaven and Jesus the great Head of the Church and the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier, directing and blessing) of a very numerous and flourishing and united congregation.

Three large and important congregations have grown from infancy to their present matured and promising organization, under the fostering care of our brother, Mr. Boyd, of Prescott,—all whose self-sacrifices, self-denial, unflinching, extraordinary labours of body and travail of soul and

prayer, for twenty years past, none but God and himself rightly know of; but I trust he will live to see a rich reward of all his toil, even here—to say nothing of his crown of rejoicing hereafter.

On Sabbath 11th, Mr. Loelhead, of the united congregations of Osgoode and Gloucester, and I, assisted our dear, interesting, young brother, Mr. Wardrop, in opening the new church, Bytown, which is one of the most elegant and commodious buildings I have seen—capable, when the gallery is completed, of holding 600 people at least.—There could not have been less than 400 present, both forenoon and afternoon,—probably more.

In the arrangement of the services, there happened one of those undesigned but remarkable coincidences of Providence which we cannot help ascribing to the great Master Worker who sitteth behind the scenes, moving all the secret springs, and regulating all human volitions, though still acting according to the freedom of motives and circumstances. Without previous knowledge of each other's subjects, Mr. Loelhead preached a most solemn, eloquent, and impressive sermon, delivered with great earnestness and power, from Psalm xlix. 8 v. "For the redemption of their soul," &c.; in the forenoon, by desire of Mr. Wardrop, I preached from the same text of my induction sermon, Spenserville (Mat. vii. 13-14—"Straight is the gate," &c.) In the evening Mr. Wardrop preached from these words, "Behold now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation"—2d Cor. vi. 2 v.—forming as much steps of a connected sequel of systematic doctrine as if we had sat down elaborately to lay out our plan.

To say that this last sermon was elegant, evangelical, and impressive, would be saying the truth, but that would be saying the least. There was such a sweet touching Christian simplicity in the whole manner of his address as could not fail to affect, though it is the peculiar prerogative of the Holy Ghost to convert the heart.

You may remember how I ventured to promise favorably of this young man at his first outset.—I venture to say now, that if God spare him, his praise will be in the Church. And why? Because I see that he is growing in grace; that he has no confidence in himself, and that he desires to make himself nothing; his Master Christ all in all. I never have intercourse with him without feeling my spirit refreshed, and without feeling that it is not amount of years, but an out of grace, that makes a minister of Christ. His simplicity of spirit shames my self-seeking and vanity.

On Tuesday, 13th, Mr. Wardrop, Mr. MacDowell, and I inducted Mr. Loelhead into the charge of Osgoode and Gloucester. Mr. Wardrop preached from Acts xii. 24 v., preached, addressed the minister and the people. Between 200 and 400 present, I should think. The building is not finished, though we occupied it, but promises to be comfortable. As a great part of the congregation, from want of ordination, joined the Baptist connection, they have had great struggles in erecting this church, and in raising anything like a competent support for the minister, who has been incessant for nine months past in his labours, and has not a little to struggle with in the newness of the country and badness of the roads in summer,—all the more trying to him that he and his large family have always been accustomed to live in places where there was a far advanced state of society. Well do I know the demands on your own wants in Hamilton, but I know also the liberality of the people of Hamilton. Had they anything to spare, I should consider it well applied to assist the people of Osgoode in finishing their church.

Mr. Melville will be obtained over the congregation of Perth; Mr. Johnstone inducted into the charge of Ramsey, about the end of February or beginning of March. Various applications for supplies came before the Presbytery, and, as far as possible, were granted.

The congregations in Kingston are, in outward respects, both increasing and prospering. We wait the answer from the Commission to our reference. A call from the Baptist congregation to Mr. Reid came before us, in which no action could be taken till we had heard from the Commission; but the Presbytery would respectfully recommend to the Commission as little delay as may be in the case. I had not intended to write above a page, but multiplicity of topics occurred, and I write down as fast as my thoughts run.

Home Missions.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE RECORD.

Hamilton, C. W., 24th Feb., 1845.

MY DEAR SIR:—I had scarcely thought of troubling you with any account of my missionary excursion to the districts of Woodstock and London, during the months of November and December last, till it was suggested that the impressions produced on a stranger visiting these places for the first time, might afford some useful hints. I am not aware, in fact, of having met with anything which has not been remarked by others, or which does not characterize many regions in this extensive Province. It were easy to give a narrative of my labours during the period referred to, but that might lead to unnecessary detail; and, as the variety of incidents would by no means keep pace with the number, the report, I fear, would be uninteresting. I shall, therefore, content myself with a few general remarks on what I witnessed during my excursion.

Woodstock and London, from their rapidly growing population, are very important stations. The Presbyterian Churches are attended by large audiences; but the congregations are by no means consolidated, or well organized. Both of them need, and it is hoped will soon receive, active and faithful ministers, who, with the Divine blessing, may be the means of preserving and extending among the people the knowledge and practice of genuine christianity. Besides, these places are central points, from which, with the increase of population around, new congregations may, by and by, be expected to branch off; and, of course, those who, in the providence of God, may be stationed in them, must lay their account with putting forth their utmost energy, in the meantime, in making frequent visits to the surrounding settlements. It is, indeed, lamentable to find so vast a section of the country, as lies around these important positions, so very destitute of ministerial supply. In a region where twenty or thirty labourers might be constantly and most usefully occupied, there are but two or three in our connection; and these, however diligent and energetic, are never able to meet those increasing necessities which they daily witness and deplore. This mournful situation, characterizing these and other districts, as interesting fields of missionary labour, has often been remarked; but it cannot be too often recorded if it has any tendency to lead christians, with still more earnestness than heretofore, to continue instant in praying, as the Saviour enjoins, to the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

In a great many townships, fully settled, in some of which are rising villages, ministers might be stationed, could they be had, with the certain prospect, through God's blessing, of being the instruments of extensive good. There is the desire, in many of these settlements, for the regular dispensation of the means of grace; and this desire is sometimes most ardent where the destitution is greatest. Nor are the people unwilling, in most cases, to do their part in the way of pecuniary support. It is only where ignorance of the necessity of this prevails, and where the gospel is not sought, that there is any grudging at making the requisite exertion for its maintenance. The people should be taught to consider it no sacrifice, but a privilege and an honour, as well as the law of Christ, to give of their substance for the support of divine ordinances; and they should be encouraged to believe that, instead of being losers, they will be great positive gainers by this service; gainers not merely in the spiritual good they receive, which is the principal thing, but gainers even in a temporal view, by the blessing of him who says—"Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

I was much pleased to find at Woodstock a select band of excellent persons who fear the Lord, and speak often one to another. A congregational prayer meeting is held every week. On the one week the exercises are conducted in Gaelic; on the other in English. I cannot judge of the state of religion among the Gaelic population, nor of the efficiency with which their prayer meeting is conducted. But if it proceed with the same life and interest that characterize the English meet-

ing, which I hope it does, there is great encouragement to believe that the parties attending these congregational prayer meetings, will, with the blessing of God, be the means, to some extent, of preserving and promoting vital religion in that place, as well as diffusing a salutary influence on the congregation at large.

The Sabbath School is superintended by able and deeply interested teachers, and conducted with efficiency. It is to be regretted that not above fifty pupils avail themselves of this means of receiving religious instruction; for in the many families I visited I observed a marked superiority among those children who attended this Sabbath School. The teachers would also conduct a Bible Class for more advanced youth; but they have not been able to induce the youth who might most profit by this class to come forward generally, such persons exposing themselves last by appearing there they should seem to betray their ignorance. I suggested that perhaps the best cure for this would be for some of the teachers, and more intelligent of the congregation, who were known not to need instruction, to take their places spontaneously at the Bible Class, which might lead to at least some of the very persons they wished to strike in. This hint was taken, and I have little doubt would be followed by important results were the practice continued. I have known such an experiment in other places attended with great success. I must not omit mentioning that in connection with this Sabbath School there is a library from which the pupils receive books to read, and also a missionary box into which they put their small pieces of money with great cheerfulness and zeal for advancing the cause of Christ. In connection with the school, likewise, there is a most interesting prayer and fellowship-meeting of its teachers and friends, held weekly, in which the subject to be explained to the children on the following Sabbath is discussed. Such a meeting is not peculiar to this place; but it is a plan which deserves to be recommended for general practice.

I spent a few Sabbaths at London, and made occasional excursions to the congregations and preaching stations in that neighbourhood. I felt some curiosity to see this place. The name of the town, of its river, and of some of its streets and bridges, carried my imagination to the great British metropolis; and perhaps I expected to find here more than I realized. But the great London was once small and insignificant, and it is possible that this its Canadian representative may one day become renowned and metropolitan like the prototype. I was not disappointed with the character, or with the condition of the congregation. It includes some excellent and intelligent christians, some who delight to minister to the least of Christ's servants, and who are exemplary in their liberality and zeal for the prosperity of the church. It would be a matter of much greater regret that the congregation here should be uncared for than the constant labours of a minister were it not that one of its members is both able and willing to lead his aid when necessary in supplying the deficiency. This excellent gentleman, whom I need not name to you, and whose own retiring disposition would make him shrink from being publicly named, though engaged in business during the week, is at great pains in explaining the Scriptures, and conducting other religious exercises on the Sabbath days and other occasions, when no minister is present. With much theological knowledge and a remarkable gift of prayer, he leads the exercises of the flock, both in English and Gaelic, to the satisfaction, and it is hoped to the edification of all; and it is pleasant to understand that the people here of late given public demonstration of their gratitude by a valuable donation, which would have been even more considerable but for the extreme diffidence of him whom it is intended to honour.

I had several other remarks to make, but must draw to a close. I may notice in general that I had sometimes opportunity of discovering most deplorable and irreparable ignorance among the young. In large families, possessing interesting groups of children, where the parents seemed active and intelligent, youths, able to assist in manual labour, are to be found who are totally ignorant of the first principles of religion. In some cases they could not give an answer to the simplest question, so which the sleeping child may be taught and should be taught, to give a prompt reply. But

it was gratifying on the other hand, to meet with many children who manifested a superiority of intellectual quickness, an extent of knowledge truly delightful, and who would have been disappointed had I not examined them. What a difference is often to be found between the children of parents who are diligent and conscientious in discharging their duty; and of those who neglect it, and how innumerable and criminal is such neglect? I shall only add that I had some striking demonstrations that the most pressing worldly avocations need not prevent, as they often do, the regular observance of family worship; for I had occasion to be with those who had scarcely time to take their food, but who never allowed anything to prevent them from collecting the members of their family "to show forth God's loving kindness in the morning, and his faithfulness every night."

Should this communication be suitable to the object of your valuable periodical, you are at liberty to make use of it as you see convenient.

I am,

My dear Sir,
Most sincerely yours,
ANDREW FERRIER.

REV. MR. BETHUNE'S MISSION ON THE GRAND RIVER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE RECORD.

DEAR SIR.—According to your request, I hasten to give you some account of my mission to the several stations along the Grand River, by appointment of the Presbytery. I have preached at Caledonia and the back settlements of Oronago and Ancaster. In Caledonia the congregation is small in proportion to the population; and not having a place of worship of their own, they meet in the school-house, which is used for the same purpose by the Episcopal congregation. As the latter had the right of prior occupancy, we could only get the use of the house in the afternoon, so that those from a distance were prevented from attending. This disadvantage has been experienced more or less in the stations generally. At the chapel in the township of Ancaster, however, no such difficulty exists, and there is a numerous attendance. They appear to be a very respectable class of settlers, and to have a due estimation of the value of the ordinances of religion.

Along the plank road which passes through Caledonia, as on every thoroughfare, there are many instances of profanity and contempt of God's holy laws, very grieving to the feelings of those who fear the Lord. On the first Sabbath of our meeting at Caledonia, while the congregation were dismissing, there was a lad selling fruit in a wagon in the middle of the town; and on a subsequent Sabbath, as I came from Ancaster by that way, I overtook a man in a wagon, who was singing a merry song with all the strength of his voice, and made the woods ring again. He did not perceive me till I spoke to him. I said, "Is it the Lord's praise you are singing on the Lord's Day?" After some hesitation, he answered, "Yes, sir." I had not time to spend with him, being in haste to meet the congregation at Caledonia; and having hinted my doubts of his sincerity, I rode on. At that same spot two men crossed the road into the forest, one of whom carried a gun.

In the woods back from Ancaster, towards the river, is a scattered population of new settlers, who are anxious for the services of our church; and I have had many applications from people in like circumstances, in various parts of my circuit, for Sabbath service, but which my appointed duties would not allow me to supply. On the west side of the river, in the township of Tuscarora, is a very interesting settlement of Presbyterians from the North of Ireland, who have squatted on the Indian lands there, to the amount of about sixty families. They made a most pressing request that I would visit them. I did so, and preached in a private dwelling to a goodly number. They are a kind and warm-hearted people. I promised to visit them again when the weather and roads would permit. I preached in a tavern on the plank road, at the request of the mistress of the house, whom I met in the dwelling of a man who was coming, and had sent for me. This man, an Irish Presbyterian, seemed to enjoy much peace and comfort in the prospect of death. He was conversant with the scriptures, and expressed his

confidence in Jesus the Saviour of sinners. A short time before this he had experienced many doubts and anxieties, but the Lord gave him good hope as the hour of his departure drew near.

My next station is in that part of Walpole situated on the Cayuga river, and in the bush in that quarter. The congregation there have a chapel of their own, and the attendance is good. On the same Sabbath I preached at Oneida, opposite Indiana, eleven miles distant. The place of worship is a school, and employed by the Methodists for their meetings. I remark in general that the forenoon services are well attended, and those in the afternoon not so well, as the bush roads cannot be travelled after sunset. Most of the Presbyterians here are newly settled, and have not yet got teams of horses, which makes it difficult for them to come from a distance, especially in winter. This difficulty, of course, will disappear in a year or two.

I was called upon to visit the family of a farmer whose child was sick. His wife was much distressed, and I endeavoured to turn her thoughts to Him who gives and takes away; and exhorted her to commit her child to Him by prayer, and to entrust that she might be enabled to submit to His will, whatever that might be. The infant died, and I was sent for to officiate at the funeral; on which occasion I preached to about twenty persons who had assembled, from the words, "Death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

The farthest extremity of my circuit is Wellandport, where there is a very good meeting; and although the hour is in the evening, yet, from its being an old settled part of the country, the people are able to come from a distance. In Danville I hold a meeting for public worship on the same Sabbath, in the forenoon, in a new house not yet finished, as the church which is erecting is not covered in. It is a very handsome brick building, done in good taste, and speaks favourably of the liberality of the people. I have experienced much kindness from several gentlemen of this place, and indeed throughout my whole circuit.

In the country, as well as in the towns, the vice of profane swearing seems to abound. I stopped to feed my horse at a tavern in a remote situation, and went into the bar-room, where the master of the house and a few others were seated around the fire. He was an aged man, and had been a soldier in his youth. He began to tell me of the war with the United States, in which he had served, but his conversation was so mixed up with oaths, that I rose up without speaking to him, and was going towards the door. He called after me, "Does my conversation not please you?" I answered, "No, it does not; it is not so much the subject, as the manner of it; for you swear so very much." I then resumed my seat, and there was silence for some time. At length he said, "You must excuse an old soldier, sir." I replied, that I did not understand why soldiers were to be excused for breaking God's commandments any more than others; and asked him, whether, if he had disobeyed his officers' orders as often as I had heard him transgress the command of the ruler of all the earth, he would not have suffered for it? He confessed that he had done wrong, and that, although he had frequently resolved to give up the practice, yet the habit was so confirmed in him that he found it impossible. I told him, if he was sincere, it was not impossible; and advised him to try it again, with regular and persevering prayer to God for assistance and strength, and there was no doubt of his success. He promised that he would try in this way; and, should an opportunity offer, I may have the satisfaction of learning from him the result.

Interim Report by the Colonial Committee, presented to the Commission of the General Assembly, November, 1815.

COLONIAL CHURCHES.

The following Report was given in by the Convention, Dr. Buchanan, at the meeting of Commission. It contains a comprehensive view of the wide-spread operations of the Colonial Scheme:

In presenting to the Commission an Interim Report of the Colonial Scheme, your Committee think it unnecessary to enter largely into detail, but

will only give a brief sketch of their proceedings since the meeting of the General Assembly in May.

The largest and most important district of the colonial field is North America, and to that the attention of your Committee has been closely applied. Sympathizing with our fellow countrymen in these colonies who have in such great numbers attached themselves to our cause, and maintained our principles amid many difficulties and serious hardships, it has been the desire of the Committee, in the meantime, to alleviate their spiritual destitution, and to devise measures for ultimately supplying their wants. The Committee have accordingly sent out several of the ministers of the Church to visit their congregations, and express the kindly interest which the Church feels towards them. They have reason to know that these visits have been greatly appreciated; and they trust they have not been left without tokens of the approval of the great Head of the Church. The Committee have likewise sent out a few missionaries, some of whom are already ordained and settled in different stations. Your Committee, while they have thus tried to provide temporarily for the wants of Canada and Nova Scotia, feel that these colonies must ultimately depend on a ministry to be reared from the colonies themselves. Your Committee rejoice that they have good grounds for entertaining the sanguine hope that such a ministry will not be wanting. Three young men were last month licensed to preach the Gospel by the Presbytery of Toronto; and Mr. Sommerville of Glasgow writes from Montreal that "God is raising up young men in various parts of the province for the work of the ministry."

The college, under the able superintendance of Dr. Burns, is this year considerably better attended than last; and the Committee have the satisfaction of being able to report that Dr. Willis of Glasgow has just sailed from Liverpool to join Dr. Burns, and assist him in the midst of his many labours. Under the tuition of two men of such piety and acknowledged learning, the Committee are confident that a staff of native labourers may be reared able to improve the propitious opening which presents itself in Canada at the present moment.

Your Committee continue to receive most pleasing and animating accounts of the prosperous state of the congregation worshipping in Coak Street, Montreal. Since May last that congregation have been favoured with the ministrations of Mr. Douar of Larbert, and Messrs. Arnot and Sommerville of Glasgow; and the Committee have pleasure in stating that they have appointed the Rev. Mr. Stevenson of Tainbody, to succeed Mr. Sommerville there; and it is hoped that, as he is to remain till next summer, the congregation will by that time have called a minister to be ordained over them.

Your Committee are gratified, likewise, to be able to announce that the Rev. Mr. Begg of Edinburgh, has agreed, at their urgent request to visit Canada and Nova Scotia, and spend the winter months there; and in making this announcement, your Committee would recommend him to the prayers of the Church, confident that, under the divine blessing, his visit will be productive of the happiest consequences.

Although your Committee are deeply sensible of their inability to meet the spiritual destitution of our North American colonies, which is ever presenting itself in some new and touching aspect, as it ought to be met, yet they cannot but feel that the visits of so many of her most eminent ministers are calculated to cheer and encourage our brethren across the Atlantic, and will stimulate them in making exertions for the supply of their own wants.

Your Committee have sent out three missionaries to Nova Scotia, and one to New Brunswick, within the last six months; but they regret that the Rev. Mr. Stevens has been obliged to return from New Brunswick on account of his health. The Committee feel that the cordial thanks of the Church are due to Mr. McMillan of Carleton, and Mr. Miller of Dundee, for their devoted and unwearied labours in this part of the province. On the condition of the Church there, however, they will not now enlarge, as Mr. McMillan is present, and will state to the Commission how great the destitution of the means of grace is, particularly among the Highland population. The wants of

our Gaelic brethren have been a source of much anxiety to the Committee, but with the great demand which now exists for Gaelic preachers in our own Highlands, it is extremely difficult to find preachers who can be spared from home. The Committee, however, are using every effort to secure a few in the meantime; and in the hope of encouraging young men speaking the Gaelic language to devote themselves to the ministry in the colonies, they propose to offer a few bursaries to such as will agree to place themselves, after being licensed, at the disposal of the Colonial Committee.

In autumn last, your Committee requested Mr. McLeod of Lough-Easter, to go to Canada and Nova Scotia for a few months. His reception has been most cordial. Of Nova Scotia he writes, that "there are at least from twenty to thirty congregations in it belonging to our Church; but there are only six or seven ministers, exclusive of Cape Breton. Two young preachers were daily expected from Scotland, who, I trust, have before now arrived, and will, by the blessing of God, be instrumental in breaking the bread of life to many souls. But what are they amongst so many? The universal cry is, "Send us, O send us, ministers from the Free Church!" Everywhere I preached, many hundreds flocked to hear—and in some places thousands. Then referring to Cape Breton, Mr. McLeod continues:

"After travelling through Nova Scotia, I visited Cape Breton, where I remained twelve or fourteen days, during which I travelled about three hundred miles, and preached about thirty times. Cape Breton was not hitherto visited by any of the deputations from Scotland; but notwithstanding, the Presbyterian population are, to a man, decided adherents of the Free Church. We have five ministers in the island—devoted and excellent men. The people there have an extraordinary thirst for the Gospel, as you may judge from the circumstance, that, although, during my stay amongst them, I preached every day, once or twice, and some days three or four times, beginning at seven o'clock in the morning, and not infrequently travelling on horseback or by boat twelve miles or more between each diet, still I observed some who were present at all the sermons I preached; and one day, when I had occasion to preach so early as six o'clock in the morning, there were several present from a district ten miles distant. I was perfectly astonished at the multitudes that flocked to hear, and the marked attention with which they heard. Without entering into particular cases, suffice it to say, that every congregation which I had the privilege of addressing was more or less affected: not only melted down under the Word, but also so much affected as to be obliged to give vent to their feelings by crying out under deep and serious concern. Seldom have I witnessed more solemnizing scenes. Of a truth the Lord is working in the midst of them, by the ministry of the Word, in connection with the Free Church. And sure I am, did our fathers and brethren in Scotland see what I saw in these colonies, and especially in Cape Breton, they would bless God and take courage. Let not our people at home be weary in well-doing. They have been privileged to do much, but much more may and must be done. Although we have five ministers there, twelve more are required, and a door is open for every one of them—churches already crowded, and congregations formed, thirsting for the Word of life. Everything connected with this island possesses an interest. The scenery is most striking—more finer in the world. The soil is good. The lakes, of which there many, are large and beautiful. The country is now being opened up with roads, so that in a very short time one can travel with ease and comfort. The people are amongst the kindest that can be; and, better still, the Gospel is felt there as the power of God unto salvation."

The congregations along the shores of the Mediterranean continue to prosper exceedingly. Mr. Stewart is forming a very interesting congregation at Leghorn; and, at the request of our countrymen there, arrangements have been made for his remaining among them more permanently than was at first proposed. He is very anxious to have the assistance of an efficient schoolmaster. The Committee have not yet been able to meet his wishes in this respect; but they cannot doubt that

so favourable a situation will long remain unoccupied.

At the request of the Free Church congregation at Calcutta, your Committee, in connection with the Foreign Mission Committee, have appointed Mr. Mackail, now stationed at Malta, to be minister of the Free Church at Calcutta. This will occasion a vacancy at Malta; which, from Mr. Mackail's assiduous, and devoted, and very successful labours, will be much felt; but the Committee are now making arrangements, which they hope will soon be concluded, for having this interesting station fully appointed.

The health of the Rev. James Julia Wood is happily restored to such a degree as to render residence in a milder climate no longer necessary. His place at Madeira, however, has been supplied by Mr. Nairne, late of Forgan, who has sailed for that island, where he purposes to remain for some years. Mr. Hewitson is still carrying on his work with untiring energy, and it is hoped not without success.

In the West Indies, Mr. Thorburn is still labouring with great acceptance at Falmouth, and Mr. Dennison occupies his station at Montserrat Bay with undiminished efficiency. A schoolmaster has recently been sent out to Falmouth, where an efficient school will be a most valuable auxiliary to Mr. Thorburn.

At Bermuda, the Rev. Mr. Morrison has given up his flourishing school, to devote himself entirely to the work of the ministry; and the Committee hope that this arrangement will be of great advantage to the cause of religion in that place.

In conclusion, your Committee have only further to notice, that the Rev. George Anderson, having been appointed at the close of summer, minister of the Free Church congregation at Antigua, was yesterday ordained by the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and he will sail immediately for that island. After the delay and disappointments which that congregation have suffered, your Committee hope that Mr. Anderson's presence among them may be felt to be very reviving, and that his labours may be blessed of the Spirit for the conversion of many souls.

Foreign Missions.

CALCUTTA.

We may with safety pronounce the storm which raged against our institution to have passed away. So far from permanent injury having been inflicted upon it, it comes forth from the ordeal unscathed, and in a more commanding position for usefulness than before. To Him, who makes the wrath of man praise to him, be the glory!

Mr. Duff records a pleasing instance of the liberality of friends in India, who, on the broad principle of Christian philanthropy, have come forward promptly and generously for providing a refuge for the converts. It is specially gratifying to receive, from brethren of other communions, such tokens of brotherly interest. We hope their example will provoke some of God's people at home with like zeal and promptitude to furnish the means of completing the important design.

LETTER—REV. DR. DUFF TO THE CONYENER.

Calcutta, September 6, 1845.

MY DEAR DR. GORDON.—It may be as well at once to relieve your mind from all anxiety, by stating that the recent mighty tempest, raised by the confederated natives, has already settled down into a dead calm; that most of those who temporarily left our institution, under a pressure of a fearful species of compulsion, have now returned, not only with the permission, but at the special request of parents and guardians, many of whom have directly or indirectly actually brought us to receive their children or wards back again; that those who have then returned speak of the difference between Sil's College and our institution, as greatly to enhance the value of the latter in the eyes of other pupils and their friends; and finally, that between these returns and the new admissions, our institution has, for some time past, been as fully attended as it was at the corresponding period last year. While, therefore, we have good reason to thank God and take courage, let us, at home and abroad, be more intent than ever in prayer, that the recent convulsion may be over-

ruled for the furtherance of Christ's cause and kingdom; and that we may be all prepared most fully in head and heart for the still greater convulsions which we may yet expect ere the standard of the cross is seen floating in triumph over the last ruins of heathenism.

Dr. Duff states, in the conclusion of this letter, that he had received, in a few days' contributions, to the amount of £1000, for the erection of a mission-house, for the accommodation of converts, the contributors being chiefly members of other Christian denominations.

TAHITI.

At a recent missionary meeting of the London Missionary Society, in Edinburgh, the Rev. W. Howe, in an interesting speech, of which the following is a brief outline, detailed the condition of Tahiti prior to the visit of the missionaries, and the frightful state of things which had resulted from the proceedings of the French. He said that he had landed at Tahiti in 1838. Two thousand of the natives had been converted, and there were many others who willingly attended the ministrations of the missionaries. The place where their idol stood was now a desolate spot, and instead of seeing the votive offerings that used to be presented to it, they were encouraged to persevere in their labours by the well-frequented church and school-house. He could not communicate to them any personal knowledge regarding the frightful scenes that used to present themselves to the first missionaries, having acquired all his information on this point from the venerable Henry Nott. They had entered into the labours of these devoted men. The missionaries established a seminary in 1841 for the bringing up of native pastors; many young men had come forward and availed themselves of the instructions to be had there, and things were proceeding in a most satisfactory manner, until these fair prospects were blighted by the conduct of the French. The Jesuits, who had watched the proceedings of the missionaries with an unfavourable eye, touched their Government in the most sensitive part, by representing to them that Great Britain was bent on establishing her sway over these distant islands. A slight circumstance occurred, which they seized hold of as a pretext for interfering in the affairs of the island. The proceedings of the French were in keeping with those of the Jesuits. The Jesuits did not come to the island in a bold, honest manner. Priest Murphy landed in the guise of a carpenter. He left the island for a time, and, on his second return, assumed the same character. He secretly propagated his opinions. When he wrote to his friends to tell them that he had prevailed on one or two of the chiefs to embrace his opinions, and advised them to come to the island, he recommended them to land in a clandestine manner, which they accordingly did. Suspicious were excited in the minds of the Tahitian Government as to their character; and the Government, on discovering the manner in which they had imposed upon them, ordered them to leave it. He (Mr. Howe) regretted the Government had taken this step. No fair need have been entertained of their success among the natives, as the people were so well acquainted with the Scriptures, that they were perfectly able to discover how opposed the doctrines these priests taught were to the truths contained in the Gospel. The French authorities said their flag had been dishonoured, and that Queen Pomare must either pay a fine, or submit to the French Protectorate, or give up the possession of the island to them. He remembered well the night when the memorable document from Governor Brousse was given to Queen Pomare to sign, requesting that Tahiti might be placed under the Protectorate of France. When she read it, she asked from whom she was to be protected? She said it was not from Great Britain, as Britain was her friend; it was not from the Americans, as they were also her friends; the only protection she required was from the people who sought to force their protection on her. That night was spent in consultation, prayer, and tears; and it was not until the last moment fixed on by the French Governor for doing as had arrived, that she put her name to the document. She told Sir Thomas Thomas, who commanded a British vessel of war at Tahiti, that her reason

for doing so was, that she dreaded that if the French flag was hoisted, part of her subjects would rise against the foreigners; and for that reason would not Great Britain, America, and other free powers, demand reparation for the injury that might be done to their subjects? She further told Sir Thomas Thompson that she intended only to submit till the arrival of the British, or whose protection she could not herself. Sir Thomas said he could do nothing for her. Mr. Howe then alluded to the hostilities which had broken out, and said that the Tahitians chiefs had resolved that they would not attack the French if they remained where they were; but they were determined to defend their land, which they said was their life, in the event of the French attempting to dispossess them of it. They had such confidence in the justice of Great Britain, that they were willing to allow their dispute to be settled between France and Britain. The natives had divided themselves into two parties, in order to defend themselves, and had taken up their position in their fastnesses. They had committed themselves to the protection of their heavenly Father in the struggle in which they were engaged. In one engagement seventy of their number had been killed. Their loss throughout the whole of the engagements that had taken place in the island was not so great as that of the French, the latter having 150 per cent. more killed than the natives. Mr. Howe next described, with touching pathos, the melancholy scene which took place on that memorable Sunday on which his brother missionary, Mr. McKean, was shot dead at his feet. A large portion of the natives had agreed, on the preceding night, to spend the day in worshipping God; but they were prevented from doing so by the French coming at daybreak to attack them. During one of the volleys which had been fired at the commencement of the engagement, and before he could retire from the spot, Mr. McKean was shot dead. The proceedings of the French in these islands would prove one of the greatest obstacles to the progress of the religion with which they were identified in that part of the world. Whenever the news of their oppressive conduct was carried, a feeling of horror was excited, and the people would have nothing to do with them in any shape. The priesthood might have been successful in some degree had these tragical events not taken place. What had occurred had also turned the attention of Protestant Europe to the exertions the Jesuits were making to spread their doctrines in these distant islands; and it had led to that desire for Christian union among Evangelical denominations at which they so much rejoiced. It had forced them to inquire into the system of Popery; and the result of that inquiry had been that they found that Popery had mapped out the world, and that to Polynesia, or Oceania, as the Jesuits called it, seven bishops had been appointed, with fifty priests, at an annual expense of about 20,000*l.* Popery had been silently making rapid strides in the Gambia Islands, in the Wallace Group, and in the Sandwich Islands, but the Protestant world had not been aware of the fact until the proceedings at Tahiti had taken place.

THE ROMISH AND PRELITICAL RITE OF CONFIRMATION

What is confirmation? Were any one to put such a question in England, he would infallibly be met by the same state of astonishment and pity, to which a native of Scotland would expose himself who would ask "what is baptism?" and yet there are a great many persons in Scotland, who, nevertheless, know their Bibles well, who do not know what confirmation is. For the information of such, whose ignorance on this point our neighbours of England would, doubtless, sincerely commiserate, we have to state, that once every year the bishop (for the rite can be performed only by a bishop) makes a tour among the members of his diocese, and lays his hands on the heads of such young persons as have been previously baptized, and have since become able to answer a few questions, which do not enter very deeply into theology, and, by the imposition of hands and prayer, confirms them. Confirms them in what? There is some little variety in the answers usually given to this question; but the following statement embodies, we think, the views generally held by Prelates on this subject:—By confirmation the person becomes a full member of the

Church, has the Holy Spirit conferred upon him, and is confirmed in a state of grace.

The Presbyterian, on first learning the marvelous virtue of this rite, is naturally anxious to know the authority on which it rests. Its advocates generally place it on two grounds. The first is *apostolical succession*; the second is *apostolical example*. To these some will add a third ground, namely, *tradition*, or the practice of the early Churches. Whately thus discriminates between the efficacy of baptism and that of confirmation,—“Baptism conveys the Holy Ghost only as the spirit or principle of life; it is by confirmation he becomes to us the spirit of strength, and enables us to stir and move ourselves.” Bishop Wilson thus speaks of the “effect and blessing of confirmation.”—“It is to convey the inestimable blessing of the Holy Spirit of God by prayer, and the imposition of the hands of God’s ministers.” The Rev. Alden Spooner of New York recently published a sermon preached on occasion of the death of the Rev. Palmer Dyer, which contains some curious illustrations of the view taken of confirmation by orthodox Churchmen in the United States.

“He was baptized. The record and proof of that (his conversion) is in the church-book at Granville, New York. At the sacred fount, there his sins were washed away, and he was regenerated.”

“He was confirmed. There is left to us no doubt as to his receiving the Holy Ghost. That gift was imparted to him in the church by the laying on of the hands of Bishop Brownell; and the record of it exists.”

Few of our readers have hitherto been aware, we suspect, of the invaluable purposes served by a parish register where presbytery obtains. It is not simply a record of baptisms,—it is a record of conversions. And if we wish to know who have been converted and who have not—whose sins are pardoned and who are still unforgiven—who have received the Holy Ghost, and who are still devoid of his gift—we have only to turn up the pages of such a register. There we learn not only the fact of conversion, but the day and the hour when it took place—not only the fact that the Holy Ghost has been bestowed, but the *anans* through which he was bestowed. There is a great assize to be held, although the day and hour when it shall take place knows no man; and seeing that assize is to turn in a great degree on the question, whether men have been converted, did it never occur to the friends of confirmation that the registers to which we have just alluded, might be useful on that occasion? Why not, if the register of a man’s baptism be also the register of his conversion?

Apostolical succession, we have said, is the first ground on which its advocates rest the rite of confirmation. Those who can regenerate men, simply by laying their hands upon their head, claim to be possessed of this power as the direct and lineal descendants of the apostles. Dr. Smyth, of Charleston, in his treatise on this rite, replies,—some will think very irreverently and unmanfully—that this makes the Spirit’s influences flow sometimes through very “filthy” channels. Doubtless; but what matters it how miry with lust the hands that are laid on the head of the candidate for confirmation, seeing these hands are charged with celestial virtue. Is there not something like high precedent for holding that the vigour and purity of the spiritual element within the man, is incapable of being impaired by the slough of abominations which encrust him without.

—The ethereal mould,
Incapable of stain, would soon expel
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire
Victorious.

But, says Dr. Smyth, the chain by which these men seek to connect themselves with the apostles, is a broken chain. A great many links are wanting. And thus says he, of the two legs on which this Gogon rests, one is a broken leg. But does not many a man, in the same predicament, coarctive to move about in the world by the help of a crutch, or of a wooden leg? And why may not this rite of confirmation do so. But if the one leg, *apostolical succession*, be broken, the other leg, *apostolical example*, we shrewdly suspect, is wanting altogether. As a sample of the sort of proofs brought from Scripture in behalf of this

rite, we may mention Acts xv. 22, where it is said, that Paul and Barnabas went “to Lystra, and to Iconium, and to Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith.” A plain man would affirm that the great apostle confirmed the disciples, not by laying his hand upon their head, but by declaring with further to them the doctrines of the gospel, and by “exhorting them to continue in the faith.”—that, in short, the friends of confirmation, who have pre-acted this passage into their service, have mistaken the sound for the sense. And so think we. And, as regards the practice of the primitive or Oriental Churches, Dr. Smyth has shown most completely that this rite was never practiced in them, as has been ignorantly asserted. The following argument of a practical kind is exceedingly pertinent:—

“And why is it, that while the inhabitants of Roman Catholic countries have universally received both the grace of baptism and the grace of confirmation, they are, nevertheless, distinguished above all others for their gracelessness, and for the abuse of Divine grace, for licentiousness, profanity, Sabbath-breaking, fornication, adultery, and open infidelity, so that whether you travel in Ireland or in Switzerland, you can trace the limits of Romanism and Protestantism, by the presence or the absence of morality, industry, intelligence, and piety?”

Our brethren—the evangelical ministers of the Church of England—ought seriously to consider the matter. They cannot be ignorant that this rite has no authority in scripture: that its tendency is to set aside God’s ordinance of baptism, and to destroy souls, by leading men to trust in the sign, while they neglect the thing signified. And can they, while countenancing such a rite, plead altogether guiltless of the blood of the souls it is destroying? “We speak as unto wise men.”—*W. W. News.*

THE BEACON’S OFFICE.

THE venerable and learned John Brown, of Hackington, gives the following account of the Beacon’s Office, in his Dictionary of the Bible.

DEACON.—The word so rendered, is applied to such as perform service in the church or state; as to Christ, Rom. xv. 8; to gospel ministers, ordinary or extraordinary, 1 Cor. iii. 5. Col. i. 22-25; to every follower of Christ, John xiii. 28; and to magistrates, Rom. xiii.; but it is chiefly used, to signify an officer in the church, whose business it is to serve in distributing the elements at the Lord’s table, and to provide for, and duly distribute provision to ministers, and to the poor, Phil. i. 1. When the converts to the Christian faith were exceedingly multiplied at Jerusalem, and the Hellenists or Jews who used the Greek language, complained, that their widows were overlooked in the administration of the sacred elements, the apostles, not reckoning it proper for themselves to leave the constant preaching of the gospel, desired the multitude of converts to choose from among themselves seven men of good report, and filled with the Holy Ghost, who might be ordained to manage this business, Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Parmenas, Simon, and Nicolin, were chosen. These the apostles ordained, by prayer and laying on of hands, Acts vi. It is required that deacons be chaste, sincere, blameless, sober, and honest, rule well their families, and be well proven, before ordination. It is plain, some of the first seven deacons were afterwards presbyters; but so where do the sacred oracles hint, that preaching belongs to the office of a deacon, 1 Tim. iii. 8-12. For many ages after Christ, they were considered as inferior to presbyters; but by Antichristian power, they were exalted above them; and continue so, in the Popish and Prelatical churches.

It is both sinful and shameful that these offices, the divine institution of which is so plainly marked in scripture, should be so often wanting in Christian congregations, under pretences that ruling elders have their whole power resident in them.

**Miscellaneous
RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.**

Knox's Church, Hamilton.—The following abstract of the accounts of this church for the past year has been handed us for publication, specially with a view to circulation among the members of the congregation. The accounts of which the enclosed statement is a summary, were presented by the Deacons to the congregation at their annual meeting on the 26th ult., on which occasion an unanimous and very cordial vote of thanks to those office-bearers was passed, for the efficient manner in which they had discharged their arduous duties. Several short addresses were made at the meeting, respecting the various objects claiming the liberality of the members of the church:—such as the sustentation of the ministry in the church generally, the Home Mission, the College, Foreign Missions, Sabbath Schools, Libraries, besides the more immediate object of maintaining the edification of the Gospel amongst themselves. It was unanimously resolved that the congregation stand on the Sustentation Fund for £250 during the ensuing year, and the harmony and right feeling which were manifested on all hands furnish a satisfactory pledge, that under the blessing and guidance of the Great Head of the Church, they will neither extend than fall short of their contributions to this and the other objects of christian benevolence. It is a pleasing feature in the enclosed statement that the several objects which ought to engage the concern of a Christian Church have not only found a place but have attracted something like a proportionate share in the givings of the congregation—as one object overtrailing the efforts of the congregation and overshadowing and dwarfing all the others. It was also very gratifying to have the decided testimony given by the Deacons as to the cheerful and unconstrained manner in which the contributions had been paid throughout the year. The system of pew rents has been laid aside in this congregation during the past year, each family being provided with sittings according to their numbers and left to contribute according to their means. The new place of worship, which in addition to ordinary claims, this congregation is erecting at an expense of upwards of £3000, is rapidly advancing towards completion, and will in all probability be ready for their accommodation about the latter end of March.

Statement by the Deacons at the annual meeting of the congregation of Knox's Church, Hamilton, of the sums of money collected during the past year.

For the Sustentation Fund	£250	0	0
Home Missions,			
collections.....	39	1	3
Ladies' association	93	4	2
	131	5	5
Foreign Missions,			
collections,....	23	13	10
Sabbath School,			
Ministry Box, ..	15	12	10
	38	6	8
College collections	36	13	0
Bursary from Ladies' Association	10	0	0
Sabbath School and Congregational Library, collection	20	0	0
Quebec collectors by fire, do..	17	6	3
Ordinary expenses—collections	93	0	11
	£596	17	3

J. DAVIDSON, Secretary,
Deacons' Court.

Hamilton, 26th Jan'y, 1846.

The Presbyterian congregation of St. Andrew's Church, London, have presented a handsome Gold Watch, an Eight-day Clock, and a set of elegant silver plated branch Candlesticks, to John Funn, Esq., the senior Elder, in testimony of their obligation for his endeavours in procuring ministerial supply, and in conducting their devotional services on the recent days while expecting a stated Pastor of their own. This congregation have sent a handsome silver and a unanimous call to the Rev. Mr. Sumner of Glasgow; and this additional testimony of their value for the means of grace, augurs well for the comfort of any clergyman, who may eventually be settled among them.

THE CONTRAST.—Saxony, at the period of the Reformation, and until she fell under the power of popery, occupied a lofty position among the states of Germany, and possessed the most important elements of national wealth and power. She has now sunk into insignificance, and has no weight in the balance of political power. On the other hand, Protestant Prussia has arisen from an obscure duchy into a mighty kingdom, is the leading power of the German confederacy, and the very centre of the learning and civilization of the world, though her soil is sandy and sterile, and nature has done for her but little. Again—

Ireland refused to bow her neck to the yoke of his holiness. Pope Adrian stirred up Henry II. to subdue her, that he might wring from her "Peter's pence," and was the first instigator of that "union" of which the Catholics now so loudly complain. Popery is the blight of her prosperity—the withering curse of her children; but—

Scotland, across the channel, is full of churches, and schools, and colleges; the land of learning, liberty, exalted sentiments, and hallowed wealth; the glory of the British Isles. Again—

In Protestant America every man sits beneath his own vine and fig tree, having none to make him afraid; peace and happiness, knowledge and love, liberty and prosperity everywhere abound. But—

In Catholic America, in Mexico, and throughout all the republics south of her, there are despotism, and anarchy, desolation and misery in fair proportion with the universal ignorance and selfishness of the people.

The fittest portions of the world—Italy, Spain, Poland, and South America—have, in the providence of God, been allotted to popery for its inheritance; these are the broad fields of the wealth it calls its own, and despite its claims; and yet all these rich and fertile countries have been impoverished, and made wretched by the mother of "abominations." No other countries of the world, ever enlightened by the gospel, have sunk so low on the scale of intelligence, wealth, and moral worth. Popery is their curse and ruin. It is a millstone hung upon the neck of all that is virtuous and lovely, and of good report in Christendom. Soon may the "mighty angel" take it up and cast it into the sea, "where it shall be found no more at all."

Signs or Progress.—During the year 1845, several marked events have occurred, which ought to be noted as signs of progress in the work of the conversion of the world. We would glance at some of them, omitting others, and aiming only to give what may be called the titles of those noticed.

1. *In India.* numerous conversions, in some instances of persons of high caste, and in other cases of communities or classes of people; proclamation of the Governor-General opening stations in the service of the Government to the pupils of the Mission Schools as well as to others, and giving a preference to the best scholars;—concession by the Government of the principle that converts should be allowed to retain their property after conversion; their legal right to do so will probably soon be granted;—the apathy of the native mind giving way to a spirit of opposition and inquiry.

2. *In China:* increased number of Missions and new Ports occupied; success of printing in Chinese with divisible metal types, established; Edict of the Emperor, giving a qualified toleration to Christianity.

3. *In Germany:* the progress of the Ronge Reformation, not Evangelical, yet greatly hostile to the Papal Anti-Christ, and perhaps leading to better things; a movement that has made a more rapid progress than the Reformation of Luther in the same period.

4. *In France:* the check given to the Jesuits; particularly, the favour shown to Colporteurs, distributing the Bible, and to Evangelical preachers in many districts and towns.

5. *In England:* the Romanist tendency of Puseyism fully developed and acknowledged, and Puseyism itself rebuked in influential quarters.

6. *Among the Jews:* an increasing spirit of inquiry concerning Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah; conversions to Christianity not unfrequent;—growing interest among Christian churches for the salvation of the Jews.

PROTESTANT LECTURES.—A Series of Weekly Lectures, on the following subjects, by Ministers of different Denominations, will be delivered in the New City Hall, Toronto, commencing on the 14th January, at 7½ o'clock, P. M.

I.—"The Church of God a Witness for Truth"; Rev. Dr. Burns, January 14.

II.—"The Nature of Spiritual Religion, as contrasted with the Religion of Sentiment and of Form"—Rev. R. A. Fyfe, January 24.

III.—"The Importance of Young Men—the formation of their Moral and Religious Habits"—Rev. H. Eason, A. M. January 28.

IV.—"Schism: its Nature, Causes, and Remedy"—Rev. G. F. Playter, February 4.

V.—"Selfishness in Individuals and Secs a hindrance to Union"—Rev. W. Rintoul, A. M. February 11.

VI.—"A Union Conference, on the basis of the Liverpool one, Feb. 18th and 19th.

VI.—"The Harmony of Protestant Churches in regard to the great Principles of Evangelical Religion"—Rev. A. Lillie, February 25.

VII.—"The Influence of Protestantism on Literature and Civil Freedom"—Rev. Dr. Willis, March 4.

VIII.—"On Intemperance and other Causes of Demoralization, with Practical Suggestions"—Rev. G. R. Sanderson, March 11.

IX.—"Man's Responsibility to God for the Exercise of his Mental Powers in Search of Religious Truth"—Rev. J. Bayne, March 18.

X.—"The Religious and Educational Aspect of Canada"—Rev. J. Roof, March 25.

A Collection will be made at each Meeting to defray expenses.

Toronto, January 1, 1846.

PATRONAGES IN THE MARKET.—We had thought that, so far as Scotland is concerned, the disposal of livings and patronages had been done away with; but it seems we were mistaken, as appears from an advertisement in the *North British Advertiser*, a few weeks ago. It is written in quite a business and attractive style. Here it is, omitting names:—"Patronage for Sale. The Patronage of a parish within twenty miles of ———, in one of the most fertile districts of Scotland. The parish is not more than a mile square, and the population is only about 1000. The stipend, at the present prices of grain, is between £300 and £350. The manse is new, large, and convenient. The globe is of the richest land. The parish enjoys easy access, including railway communication to ——— and ———, and is in the route of the proposed railway to the north. The incumbent is above 60 years of age;—the Patronage is therefore in every way a most desirable one to possess. Apply to Mr. ———!" We hope this is among the last of such public transactions. They are a disgrace to religion.—*John o'Great Journal.*

THE JESUITS.—There are at this moment in Italy 150 houses of the order of the Jesuits, containing nearly 5000 persons, of whom 100 are priests. In France there are 56, containing 873 Jesuits, of whom ——— are priests. In Germany there are 83, of whom ——— are situated in Bavaria, 21 in Austria, 3 in Wurtemberg, 7 in Baden, 2 in the two Meas, 2 in Nassau, 5 in the province of Rhenish Prussia, 3 in Westphalia, 6 in Silesia, 2 in Saxony, 1 in Anhalt-Kothen, and 5 in Hanover and the Free Cities. In the Grand Duchy of Posen there are 7; in East and West Prussia, 5; in Pomerania, 2; in Brandenburg, 2; in the province of Saxony, 1. The total number of the Jesuits living in these houses is 1000, of whom 400 are priests. In Spain there are 87 houses, containing 537 Jesuits, of whom 220 are priests; and in Portugal 8, containing 160 Jesuits, of whom 75 are priests.

POPERY IN OREGON.—The Catholic Almanac for 1846 says that in Oregon there are already 16 priests, one religious institution for young men and one for females; also two academies and 7000 of a Romanist population. Such and (says the Advocate) for the propagation of false doctrines and a corrupt religion, need not surprise any one, who calls to remembrance who they were who "compared sea and land to make one penny for" or who remembers that the Mormons are among the most active and zealous missionaries in the world.

