

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Home Mission Field.

DEAR EDITOR,

As the Domestic Missionary Board have made an appeal for pecuniary aid to carry on their work, it may not be amiss for me, having visited some of the eastern localities, to give a little information as to the claims of our Home Missionary field. Our friends who live in a Baptist community, visit the social prayer-meeting every week, hear the gospel every Sabbath, and who, when sick or in trouble, can enjoy the calls of a beloved pastor, have but little idea of the privations of those residing in the widely scattered parts of the Home Missionary field.

A glance at the extent of the field, the isolation, and in most cases the feebleness of the churches would do much to dispel our apathy and inactivity. If we will trace on a map the line of seashore, embraced, we may gain some idea of the whole surface of country from which comes to us the Macedonian cry. Survey the southern coast of Nova Scotia, from Halifax to Canso, say a distance of 150 miles, lined with inhabitants, there are but five small churches. The number once was seven: but two have ceased for want of proper missionary care. Take next the north east coast of Nova Scotia, from Canso to Bay Verte, say 150 miles more, and including that at the Strait, we have but three churches on the shore, besides two others which, for the reason above given, have ceased to exist. On this 300 miles of shore we have but two resident pastors—Elders Miller at Canso and Foshay at Pugwash. In the interior of this extensive country our churches and pastors are still more scarce, while almost every where there is a demand for Baptist preaching.

Go next to P. E. Island.—The south east shore from East Point to Charlottetown, a distance of above seventy miles, the great Baptist field on the island, including North River, contains five churches. These were once flourishing and effective. Would that the same could now be said of them all. On the western coast, say for 100 miles, there are but two churches—Dug River and Bedeque. At Tryon the church has lost its visibility, except in an old dilapidated meeting-house. On the north east shore, say for 140 miles, there is one small society of Baptists, where Elder Davis occasionally preaches. These I believe are the only churches on the island, although it is from 20 to 30 miles wide, settled, and almost everywhere open to the preaching of the gospel.

Go now to Cape Breton.—Take the southern coast, from the Strait of Canso East, say 100 miles, we have but one church at Mira, where the Lord has lately blessed the people. On the south east shore, say of 100 miles in extent, embracing the Baptist field of Cape Breton, there are three churches, including North and South Sydney. Survey finally the north coast for 100 miles more, and we have but one small society at Port Hood. Throughout the whole interior of this island we have but three other churches—Baddeck, Margaree and Mabou, and all are yet in their infancy.

Considering, then, the greatness of the field still to be occupied, what remedy can be devised? The manner in which these few churches took their origin will, in part, furnish a reply. The fathers in the ministry were willing to go occasionally on long preaching tours, their churches were willing for them to go, and God was willing to bless their labors in raising up new churches along their pathway. If the same course were still pursued by our able ministers and churches, the same results would doubtless follow, for God never allows His word to return void. If our pastors would spend a few summer weeks or months watering these little vines, what joyful news would they have to tell their people when they returned. Their story might be like that of Paul and Barnabas to the church in Antioch when they came back from their first missionary tour, and told what great things the Lord had done through them. Who will make the trial in the approaching summer?

But though such tours as these might be of great service in planting new churches, yet it requires something more to train them up, and make each one a centre of light to those around. Wherever an interest is begun in a large community, there an efficient missionary should be placed to co-operate with the church in enlarging the boundaries of Zion. This is one great end which our Missionary Society has in view. To some extent, they have been enabled to accomplish this end. Permanent missions have been sustained at Dartmouth, Antigonish, and among

the Gaelic of Cape Breton. Elder Hugh Ross residing at North Sydney, cultivates a field 80 miles in extent, going 40 miles south to Schooner Pond and 40 miles north to St. Anns. Elder Davis, also, is aided in his labors at Charlottetown. Shall these devoted men, and others too, be forced away from their posts for want of encouragement? Every Christian heart says, No. Then we need to establish more permanent missionaries. One at least should be sent to P. E. Island, who shall be wholly devoted to the work. Another should be stationed at Pictou and River John. Another at Plaister Cove and Guysborough. A fourth should be located in North Sydney, a man of natural and gracious endowments, and one, if possible, who could draw some young men around him, to instruct them, and direct their labors in the wide field which he would occupy.

These, then, are the wants of our Society. Four additional men at least, and means to encourage all to persevere in their labors. How shall these requirements be met? Let those young men whom God has anointed to preach the gospel to the poor answer one part of the enquiry, and those brethren whom God has endowed with the things of this world to communicate for His glory answer the other.

But perhaps some one will ask why I, a College Agent, should take such a deep interest in the Home Missionary Society. The reason is obvious. The mission is not only an instrument for bringing souls to God, but it also lays broad and deep foundations for every good institution to rest upon. Acadia College in a special manner has nothing to fear but everything to hope for from the preaching of the gospel, the outpouring of the Spirit of God, the conversion of sinners, and a revival of pure religion among the churches.

I remain, yours in Christ,
D. FREEMAN.
Chester, Feb. 14th, 1859.

Written for the Christian Messenger.

Smiles,

BY RUPERT RUDOLPH.

Smiles are the sunshine of the soul playing over the human features—the rays shed forth by the immortal spirit and irradiating the face of man with their heaven-born beams. On the features of the tiny babe they betoken the first dawn of intelligence; the mother watches them playing over its visage, and reflects that those smiles are the index of the immortal principle, perpetual as heaven and lasting as eternity.

Smiles are one of the grand characteristics of the human race as opposed to the brute creation: one of the proofs which evince to us, that man is more than a mere animal—a complex mass of bone and muscle, which are to remain so long as life and animation pervade the system, but when these with the breath they draw become extinct meet one common decay. But man is susceptible of what brutes are not; he can speak, he can think, he can SMILE. These are all indications to us that man is not a mere animal, but a being actuated by principles and motives heavenly—immortal.

Smiles are also evidence of internal enjoyment. How dark and dismal would that face appear which never wore a smile. What an anomaly it would be in our world. How would our pleasures be reduced if the face of our friend never wore a smile of welcome on our approach, or our returning relative never greeted us with the smile of recognition. When the overlaid spirit bursts forth in a fit of merry laughter, why should we not appreciate it? It is the proper channel which nature has ordained for the outlet of those emotions of mirth and gladness which pervade every bosom, but which none can suppress.

Nature never decreed that man should pass through time with an elongated visage: harsh and forbidding, sullen, dejected. We have no sympathy with that individual who deems it weak and effeminate either to laugh or to cry; who studiously endeavors to conceal all emotions calculated to curl his lip with a smile, or moisten his eye with a tear. By doing this we should fight against nature and trying to overcome all the finer sensibilities of human life. There may be those who would not only do this, but would go a step further—they would stop the singing of canaries, the twittering of swallows, the cooing of doves; they would take the fragrance from the flowers which bloom in our gardens, and snatch the golden orbs from the firmament and coin them into money. But thanks to a kind Creator, these things are placed beyond their reach and we enjoy immunity from such sordid schemes.

Nature intended man for enjoyment. She intended him to seek and obtain pleasure among her own productions and in her own domains.

She has given him colours the most gorgeous and beautiful—scenes the most sublime and pleasing, melody the most exhilarating, and perfection with which art can never be compared.

Smiles, the first intelligible language of the helpless infant, whose untaught tongue has not yet learned to lip words of affection, convey to us the fact that it is susceptible of enjoyment, first faint ray of that dawning spirit which can never decline. Frequently they are the only token which we have of the last victory of the dying Saint. The hand which has spread its bounties around and caused the smile of gratitude to illumine many a dejected visage, lies motionless and feeble—the tongue which has so often uttered words of kindness and love to the poor wanderer is faint and powerless. Death has secured his victim, but the smile of triumph overspreads his pallid face as he yields his life to the claims of nature, and falls into the arms of his Saviour.

It is the mission of kind words and sweet smiles to turn the dreariness of winter into summer charms—to disperse the thick clouds of grief and sadness—to revive the withered blossoms of Paradise—to heal the wounds which nature must endure. May they faithfully accomplish their hallowed work!

Provincial Parliament.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, February 15th, 1859.

The House met and proceeded to Government House to present the Answer to the Address.

The Speaker reported that the Address had been presented, and His Excellency had been pleased to return the following Reply:

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly:

I thank you for the Address you have just presented.

I receive with satisfaction the assurance with which it concluded that you will give your best consideration to the business of the Session, and I earnestly hope that your deliberations will result in advancing the best interests of the Colony.

Mr. Martin I. Wilkins gave notice of moving the following Resolution in reference to the extension of the Railway to Pictou, and proposed that it should be made the order of the day for Saturday:

“Whereas it cannot be expected that the trade and intercourse between Halifax and Truro, can possibly remunerate, or even pay the working expenses of the Railroad terminating at that place, and it is desirable that a communication by railroad should be opened with the Gulf of St. Lawrence, to command the Gulf trade of Canada, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Cape Breton, and other places in the Gulf, and also with the Coal Mines in Pictou:

Resolved, That it is the opinion of the House that the Commissioners of Railroads should forthwith proceed to extend the road to Pictou, and complete the same with as little delay as possible.

Hon. Provincial Secretary said that surveys had recently been made with a view to estimate the cost, and that Mr. Laurie was now engaged in preparing his report on the subject. He thought it would be premature to discuss the subject until the House was in possession of this information, and also of the report of the Railway Commissioners on the subject.

Mr. Wilkins had no wish to precipitate the matter, and would consent that it should remain over for another week.

The time for presenting Petitions and introducing private and local Bills was extended until 22nd February.

Mr. Shaw presented a petition from G. F. Ditmars, Coroner of Clements.—Referred to Relief Committee. Also, from the Overseers of the Poor of Annapolis. Also, from Clements. Also, four road petitions.

Mr. M. I. Wilkins presented the petition of the Pictou Academy.

Mr. Esson presented a petition from the Roman Catholics of Dartmouth, praying that a part of the Common be set apart as a burial ground. Also, introduced a Bill in conformity with the prayer thereof. He also introduced a Bill to incorporate the Trustees of the Temperance Hall and School House at Hammond Plains. Also, a Bill to incorporate the Halifax Fire Insurance Company. Also, a petition of the inhabitants of Caledonia, for a grist mill. Also, from Robt. Logan and others, for an office for the Registry of Deeds in Musquodoboit. Also, from Robert Logan and others on the subject of Railway Rates.

Hon. Provincial Secretary wished the public and the petitioners to know that it was not the present government who sent the tax gatherers amongst them. The railway policy under which they are rated was initiated by the late government, and under the Act prepared by hon. Mr. Howe these petitioners were liable to be rated, and the government had no power to relieve them. They stood in the same position as other localities through which the road passed. He felt it necessary to make these remarks to disabuse the minds of the people on the subject.

Mr. Esson was glad that the Provl. Secretary had made this explanation, as he thought the responsibility did not rest with the government, but that the petitioners were rated under the general act of the Legislature.

After some further remarks from Hon. Mr. Howe and the Attorney General, and other gentlemen, on the subject of the inequality of the

railway rate in the different counties, the petition was laid on the table.

Mr. Esson also presented petitions from others on the same subject. Also, from the inhabitants of Upper Musquodoboit on the subject of the survey of Crown Lands. Referred to the Committee on that subject. Also, from John Holdman and others of Musquodoboit in reference to the division of the County of Halifax.

Mr. Wade asked leave to introduce a Bill to amend the New Practice Act, being the same introduced by him at the last Session.

Mr. Munro presented petitions from Michael Flemming and others, praying to be reimbursed expenses incurred in building the “Charles Tupper,” ferry boat, on the Bras d’Or.

Also, from the Commissioners of Schools for the County of Cape Breton, and others, asking for a grant of £150 in addition to the sum now given, to enable them to convert the Grammar School at Sydney into an Academy.

Hon. Mr. Howe presented the petition of James Burgess of Windsor, praying for remuneration for Railway damages. He explained the peculiar hardship of the case.

Hon. Atty. General remarked that he believed the difficulty had arisen in consequence of the property being mortgaged. He thought that if petitioner obtained a certificate that the County had been assessed, the matter would be arranged.

Mr. Chambers explained that the Assessors had refused to act, and that the law made no provision for the substitution of others. In consequence of this not a shilling had yet been collected, and that was the reason why Mr. Burgess had not been paid.

Hon. Atty. General.—The difficulty then appears to have arisen from the neglect of the County officers. It was a hard case that Petitioner should be kept out of his money for that reason.

Hon. Mr. Howe thought that some special provision should be made to meet the exigencies of this case.

The petition was laid on the table.

Also, a petition from the Commissioners of the poor for Windsor.

Mr. Wilkins asked leave to introduce a Bill for the regulation of truckmen and trucking in the County of Pictou.

Mr. Moses presented petition of Edward R. Kelly of Chebogue, County of Yarmouth, praying for the establishment of mail route. Also from Keeper of Light House at Yarmouth, for increase of salary. Also, four petitions numerously signed from inhabitants of Yarmouth, praying for the passage of a Prohibitory Liquor Law.

Mr. Webster presented petition of the inhabitants of County of King’s, praying that Gibbons’ Wharf be made a Port of Entry. He also presented the petition of the Overseers of the Poor for Aylesford.

Mr. Tobin presented the petition of John Gumb, stating that his house and furniture had been destroyed by fire, also £46 in Province notes—accompanied by certificate, affidavit, &c., praying for relief. Also, from the Pilots of Halifax, praying that the rate of Pilotage be raised. Also, from Merchants of Halifax, praying for an alteration in the duties on sugars. Also, asked leave to introduce an Act concerning the City of Halifax.

Mr. McDonald presented several petitions.

Mr. Wier presented several petitions. Mr. Parker asked leave to introduce a Bill to amend chapter 131 Revised Statutes, on the Jurisdiction of Justices of the Peace in civil cases. Also, presented a petition from inhabitants of Walton, complaining of action of owners of a steam saw mill in the neighbourhood.

Hon. Mr. Howe presented petition of John Doran of Windsor, on the subject of Railway damages. Also, from E. K. Butler.

Mr. Tobin asked leave to introduce a Bill to incorporate the Union Hall Company at Margaret’s Bay.

Mr. P. Smyth asked leave to introduce an Act to legalize certain proceedings of the Sessions for Inverness. Also, presented petition of Malcom McDonald, for ferry boat destroyed.

Hon. J. Campbell presented two petitions of the inhabitants of Greenfield and Pleasant River, County of Queens, against the bill for the equalization of the representation.

Hon. Attorney General presented petition of Jas Harris and others praying an alteration in the statute labor law, and asked leave to introduce a bill on the subject. Also, a road petition. Also, presented petition of the committee Nova Scotia Baptist Education Society with the annual Report.

Hon. Provincial Secretary, by command of His Excellency, laid on the table of the House the following documents:—A copy of the order of Queen in Council, confirming 92 acts of Provincial Parliament. Also, copy of like order specially confirming certain provisions of the merchants’ Shipping Act. Also, copies of the correspondence between the Imperial and Colonial Governments, in relation to the Mines and Minerals. Also, copies of the correspondence relating to the Federal union of the British Colonies. He also gave notice that the government intended shortly to introduce a resolution on that subject. Also, copies of correspondence relating to the Inter Colonial Railway. He stated that copies of these papers would shortly be in the hands of the members. He also laid on the table a return of perfected grants of Crown Lands for the quarter ending 31st December, 1858. Also return of grants applied for during that time. Also the report of commissioners for Crown Lands for the year 1858.

Mr. Archibald asked the government to lay on the table a copy of the rules and regulations in reference to the opening of new mines.

Hon. Atty. General replied that he intended to do so, and also to introduce a bill on the subject.

Hon. Mr. Howe asked for returns of the number of applications for new mines.