

HOME MISSIONS, WEST.

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In a leaflet published by the Home Mission Committee, West, and in letters recently published, are statements that the Church would do well to ponder. We shall reproduce some of them.

The Committee has 385 missions on its list and connected with them are one eighth of the families and young people of the whole Church. The people of these missions provide two-thirds of the salaries of their missionaries, and the Committee only about one-third. There cannot be much over-lapping.

Since the Union, more than 300 of the missions became congregations. This means that more than one-third of the congregations of the Western Section are the result of Home Mission effort, during the past twenty years. What large help these congregations must be giving to Foreign Missions, Colleges, and other Church Schemes.

Over 20,000 Presbyterians, and a large mixed multitude besides, of different creeds and nationalities in the West, are without the pale of any church. Is this right? Is it safe to leave them uncared for? The risk to religion, to law and order, to morals, is too great. Lengthen the cords of the tent that they too may be sheltered.

The population of the Maritime Provinces is said to be stationary; that of Quebec and Ontario increasing 1 per cent. per annum; while that of the West increased, between 1880 and 1890, at least 14 per cent. per annum. The extent and resources of the West furnish room for 50 millions of people. The centre of population and trade is sure to shift westward as time passes. Is the Church prepared for impending changes.

The hindrances to progress in the West are pointed out. Mormonism is a menace; it is well organized and aggressive. It will bear watching. In mining camps, unbelief, Sabbath desecration, drinking, worldliness, lewdness, gambling, are the open

and flagrant sins. It would seem as if these black vices, everywhere, were checked and restrained by the power of the gospel. Striking illustrations are given in proof. Meet the enemy in the open at every point.

To illustrate the progress and success of the work, certain sections are selected, like Quebec, the Ottawa Valley, Central Ontario, Algoma, Muskoka and the Northwest.

Since the Union, the Presbyteries of Montreal and Quebec show a gain, in families and communicants, respectively, of 72 and 93 per cent. "Eleven Protestant families (mostly Scotch) settled at Murray Bay in 1812; their descendants to-day number 10,030; they were neglected, and now they are all French-speaking Roman Catholics! If it is worth while to try to make Protestants of the French Roman Catholics of Quebec, it is surely worth while to keep our Protestant population from becoming Roman Catholics."

In the Ottawa Valley, the families increased, in 20 years, 108 per cent., and the communicants 162 per cent; the contributions for Schemes went up from \$3,999 to \$22,233; and for all purposes from \$55,574 to \$147,731.

The Presbytery of Kingston, after nursing to maturity, and sending off, six congregations, and handing 2 missions and several stations to other presbyteries, reports a gain of 50 per cent. in missions in 11 years, 300 percent. in communicants, and 400 per cent. in contributions.

At the Union, Muskoka had 4 missions and 13 stations. Since then 5 missions have become congregations, and 41 missions, with 91 stations, still remain, half a dozen of which have reached the congregational stage.

The whole Presbytery of Algoma, with the exception of 2 missions, has been created since the Union.

In Western Canada in 1881, there were two congregations; in 1897 there were 57 congregations. In 1870, 1 Presbytery, with 9 stations and 200 communicants; now 2 synods, 14 presbyteries, 900 stations, 20,000 communicants, and a revenue of \$257,200. The Church should not stint this work, for her strength and success are largely bound up in it.