

The following figures will present the growth of the Church since the Union of 1875:

Presby- teries	Congre- gations	Mis- sions	Sta- tions	Fami- lies	Single Persons	Com- muni- cants
1875 1896	13 53	14 174	15 81	37 13,225	57 5,410	495 18,110

The figures for 1896 are not published, but the total revenue for all purposes, as reported last year, was \$268 535; while the revenue of 1875 was only \$6,725. i.e. the West gave only two-thirds of 1 per cent. of the revenue of 1875, and 12½ per cent. of that of 1894.

The sturdy and hard-headed doctor grows touchingly pathetic in describing how necessary is systematic pastoral visitation. "Many of the people are strangers, and some home-sick. A visit from a minister is to them particularly welcome. The reading of the Scriptures and prayer refresh the spirit and link the people with the best in their past life. When frost has blighted prospects; when prairie fires have swept the country side, wiping out wheat-stacks and dwellings, licking up the earning of years and leaving only a blackened waste; when sickness has visited the home, or death has robbed the family of some loved one, the missionary finds opportunity to sympathize, to encourage and to lead the stricken heart to Him who has promised to be the Refuge and Strength of His people and a Present Help in their time of need."

The difficulties are thus keenly sketched: "The missions are generally large, four or five stations forming the charge and none of them nearer than eight miles. Frequently the missionary travels thirty miles on Sabbath and preaches three times. Different fields and seasons call for variety in the means of locomotion. By sleigh and buckboard, boat and saddle, by rail and on foot, the distance is covered, and whether the thermometer stands at 40 below zero in the sun or 90 above in the shade, it is seldom a service is missed. Occasionally men have spent the night on the prairie in a blizzard, the morning finding them exhausted by anxiety and cold; storms have driven them on rocky shores and wrecked their boats, but they never thought of giving up work. Last season one of the missionaries descended 3,000 feet into the valley from the mountain side to conduct an afternoon service, and then climbed back for the evening service. To meet the wants of a number of miners, another missionary walked every week nine miles, climbing over 3,000 feet in making the journey. The missionaries, as a class, are not only men of high character, faithful in the discharge of duty and acceptable as preachers, but also men of education and culture. About 60 per cent. of the ordained missionaries are graduates in arts or theology; and of all ministers in the Presbytery of Toronto only 61 per cent. can claim that distinction, and 41 in the Presbytery of Hamilton."

Grateful acknowledgement is made of the aid received from churches and individuals in the old country, as also of the efforts of Young People's societies, and of the various college missionary societies.

The details and the grand total in the following summary are alike gratifying:

Home Mission Fund	\$75,337 62
Lumberman's Mission	350 00
College Societies:	
Morrin College (estimated at)....	200 00
Montreal College.....	\$79 82
Queen's College.....	1,375 07
Knox College.....	2,215 88
Manitoba College (estimated at)...	600 00
Expended by Presbyteries or Cities in Home Mission Work, in addition to the ordinary contributions of congregations, so far as reported to the Convener.....	17,089 00
	\$98,147 39

There is now a balance to credit of \$5,210, but it is to be stated that, "but for the assistance given by the British churches, and special donations, there would have been this year a large deficit. As these are always more or less uncertain from year to year, the revenue from our congregations and individual members should be such as will enable the Committee to meet all demands made upon it. There are always special cases that can be advantageously helped, and important fields that can be occupied by the help of such special bequests as may come into their hands over and above the regular revenue from the churches."

The list of missionaries embraces 157 ministers and licentiates, 211 students in various stages of their course, and 51 catechists, a total of 419.

The report was moved by Rev. Dr. Warden in a concise address of much power, and the Rev. Dr. Robertson followed and seconded its adoption in a characteristic speech. He stated that although a policy was followed in the West of grouping stations to

the utmost, some thought too much, an addition was made, on the average, of ten new Mission every year, and last year the number of communicants had increased by 2,000. It is the aim of the Home Mission Committee to go wherever settlers go, so that the work has to extend, and it required the very best men to meet and cope with the difficulties found in the West and British Columbia. He referred to the liberal help given by the Lower Provinces, and by the work and contributions of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, and the U. P. Student's Society, and to evoke this in still larger measure it was only necessary that the ministers of the Church should present the facts to their people, who, in his experience, he had always found were willing to give when the claims of Home Missions were properly presented to them.

The Rev. Mr. McBeth, the next speaker, and a native of the West, insisted that the law of progress was to hold what the Church has and gain more. The great dangers, he said, in the West was the lapsing of whole families, which he illustrated from cases which in his own experience he had met, by neglect through the want of gospel ordinances, and the growth of infidelity.

Mr. Reid, an elder and merchant from Lacomb, made a very clear presentation of the growth of settlement in the West, the difficulties the people have at first to contend with, the mode of settlement, and the trying and adverse circum-

stances under which church planting can only be prosecuted. In his own congregation in the distant West they had a Sabbath Observance Society which had been found of great use, a Sunday School Union, Christian Endeavour and Ladies' Aid.

like McQueen, Wilson, E. D. McLaren, McClay, and many of the missionaries who worthily and loyally worked with them. He presented some of the discouragements, warned those proposing to enter upon work in the West, against being led away by romance; the work grows monotonous, has many things in it which try men, and it especially required a high degree of spirituality to bear up against those influences in the religious atmosphere which tended to drag down.

The Rev. Dr. King was the last speaker and carried the tone and spirit of the meeting up to a higher level, high throughout as it had been. He confessed that, although his heart had all his life been greatly interested in Home Mission work, he rejoiced in the deepened sense of obligation which now prevailed throughout the Church to prosecute vigorously the work among the heathen abroad. The work at home he considered had been greatly helped by this deepened sense of obligation. The greatness of the work added to the greatness of the honour of having such a work put into the hands of our Church to do, and if the Church would rise up to the greatness of it, it would be so much the greater a blessing and honour to her. The feeble churches were needed and were a source of blessing to the Church by the self-sacrifice which they evoked, for self-sacrifice was that upon which the Kingdom of God was founded. The Church in Canada owed much of its doctrinal soundness and orthodoxy to the

Manitoba and British Columbia. One is labouring in Algoma and another in the Province of Quebec.

The salary of the Principal has been paid in full by the Churches within the Western Synods, with three or four hundred dollars over and above which goes into the general revenue of the College. A generous cheque of \$1,000 from Mr. and Mrs. Ironside, of Manitoba, and various legacies, were mentioned, especially those of the late Warden King and Robert Anderson, of Montreal. Mr. King was an old and liberal friend of the College. Notwithstanding these considerable sums the revenue has still fallen short, the amount from Ontario, Quebec, the Maritime Provinces, showing a steady decrease year by year. The report of the Board goes on: "While still believing the summer session to be advantageous to the Home Mission work of the Church, the Board now respectfully request the General Assembly to relieve the College from carrying it on any longer, as the condition on which it was undertaken by the Board, the provision by the Church of the additional expense incurred, has never been fulfilled, and as it has become evident that, in the absence of this additional contribution to income, it cannot be maintained without involving the College again in debt, from which it has been freed only by a great effort. All the members of the teaching staff are overworked, but especially this so in the case of the Principal. Besides dis-



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great and pressing needs for work laid upon it, for it was everywhere felt and seen that it was only the old gospel and the whole gospel that had the power to meet, to grapple with and overcome the evils they came in contact with in their mission fields in all the great North-West and British Columbia. What they had most to fear and guard against was indifference, for the church which could look upon even the smallest handful of erring, sinning men, and yet make no effort, stretch out no hand to save them, was a church which had begun to decline.

THIRD DAY. FRIDAY MORNING.

The Assembly took up the reports of the Colleges, beginning from the West. Principal King presented the report of Manitoba College: 206 students were in attendance, of which 27 were in theology; 92 students of the College went up to the examinations of the University of Manitoba and secured fourteen scholarships, being more than half of the whole number and representing the sum of \$1,055. Eleven students completed their Theological course at the close of the session in August. The most of these having received the license, and some of them also ordination, are now at work within the bounds of the Synods of

charging all the duties which necessarily devolve upon him as the head of the institution, he has now for some years, without intermission, been spending at least eleven months of every year in the laborious work of teaching. The Church has no right to impose upon him such heavy work seriously impairing his health and shortening his life. To carry on a summer session he must be relieved from the larger part of his work in teaching during the winter. Owing to the failure of the Church to provide the increased financial support, on the faith of which the work of a summer session was begun, the Board has been unable to relieve him. But that relief must be secured before another summer session can be undertaken.

"That by great exertions the Principal has freed the College from a heavy debt, and that by careful management, and the exercise of rigid economy, he has, up to the present time, kept it from again falling into debt, cannot be an argument to justify failure on the part of the Church to do its duty. If extra work is to be done by the College to assist the Church in carrying on Home Mission work, it is surely not asking too much, to meet the extra expense necessary for doing that work. But what are the facts? The College has never received the additional \$1,500 a year, on the faith of which the