

The year's work has been marked by influences tending towards the consolidation of work begun in preceding years, and by perfecting methods of operation which had already received your sanction.

For two years past there had been so much new ground broken and so many—in comparison to our strength in other respects—tender plants set out, that we found it necessary to shorten sail somewhat in that respect, and give care not to allow what we had brought into being to die or suffer. We feel our need more than ever of energetic and godly men prepared to undertake the difficulties incident to new fields. It is with us as in agriculture. Many may be fitted to work and manage the farm cleared of impediments, well fenced and with all necessary buildings, while few are endowed with the boldness, energy and perseverance required for pioneer settlement—cutting light into the dark forest, ploughing around stumps and scratching in seed for bread. We have felt, and still feel, that our Colleges must provide us with men—not so much for the city churches, as for the hard and often thankless work of making places for the gospel and ordinances of the New Testament Church. At this present hour, above everything else, we need men for such places as Port Arthur, Cobourg, Windsor, Essex Centre, and North Bay, where angels might covet the privileges of labor. We emphasize our need of men. A feeling has grown up in past years, that to be a home missionary is humiliating. In some considerable measure this has passed away, yet there remains, we fear, the thought—in part, at least—that to become a missionary pastor is to discount oneself. This Society, if it ever will do the great work which is possible for it, must use every legitimate means to remedy this state of things. Instead of the country churches living upon the charity of the cities and towns, the case is reversed. The Mission Churches are the mountain rills and brooks which fill the navigable waters of our city churches. To no little degree do our mission churches supply the bone, and brain, and muscle and fibre of our larger churches; and to be at the headquarters of supply is no little honor, if honor is the consideration. Let it be the care of every member of this Society to put beyond a possibility any reflection upon such posts of honor as our hard-working missionaries occupy. In giving them an equal standing with any other pastor in our Convention and Boards, we have only done what was just. If, in any other way, we can remove the impression of disqualification, which may still cling to the thought of home missionary, we will be only doing what is absolutely necessary in order to be equal to the grand occasion before us. We want men, first-class men; and if ever we are to do Home Mission work as it ought to be done, this must be constantly kept in view, and every energy enlisted to secure them.

While we acknowledge how unreliable statistics often prove to be, we wish to draw attention to some which we vouch for, and which can be kept in memory and used where it is necessary to awaken zeal or inspire confidence in mission work.

Of the 280 churches reported in the *Year Book*, 110 are in the care of, and receiving help from, this Society. In the membership of these 110