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REPORT
Of the Board of Home Missions
for 1853-4.

With the close of another year, the Board of Home Missions beg respectfully to submit to Synod, a statement of the position and prospects of the work under their superintendence.

At the termination of the year 1852-3, the Board were enabled to present to Synod evidence of marked extension in Home operations, and an enlarging interest on the part of the Church. For years previous to 1852-3, continual and painful fluctuations both in funds and means of supply had characterised the elements of the Board's activity and usefulness. Latterly these have become less frequent, while the very circumstances under which they occurred, though affording cause of regret, yet as indicating a demand larger than existing resources, was calculated to encourage to exertion. Deficiency in funds has yielded to more enlarged and adequate contributions, and the difficulty has not been, as heretofore, to find employment for the small amount of missionary agency at the disposal of the Board, but to find a sufficiency of labor to meet the increasing and urgent necessity. While this last portion of the work has often pressed heavily upon the Board, yet, as one of the aspects of the times, it is highly gratifying, and calculated to awaken the Church's activity, manifesting, as it assuredly does, the

effect of energy in increasing the sphere of the Church's operations.

Beyond the range of old congregations the principles and work of the Church were comparatively little understood, and where for years distribution of ordinances existed, were little appreciated. But as the former became better known, and the latter desired for something better than this world can give, was awakened and stimulated by the presence and labors of the Synod's missionaries, a different state of things was produced; and hence the reason why demand has exceeded the means of supply at the disposal of the Church. This gradual extension of the work is constantly bringing to light detached portions of Presbyterianism, requiring the fostering care of the Synod; and the Board, would recommend that, as far as possible, localities where there are but a few Presbyterians should receive their due share of attention in common with stations so called, and vacancies. In such cases the expense incurred compared with the extent of Presbyterianism may seem a valid objection to such a course. But there are considerations in view of the Church mission and duty, paramount to such objections. The visible return in actual benefit may be little, and in pecuniary aid still less, yet futurity may show that the expenditure has been wisely made.

Much of the improvement visible in public sentiment toward Home evangelization,