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Toronto, April 4, 1895.

The Home Mission Committee.

THE work of this Committee has been brought before the public once again by the meeting held in Toronto last week, extensive reports of which have been given by the Toronto press. On another page we give an account of the meeting so that our readers may peruse it at their leisure. Assuredly the facts set forth deserve the closest and best attention of all who have an interest in the welfare of the Church. To begin with, the wide field of work, and the nature of the work undertaken, will be noticed. The importance of that work to the life of the Church will be admitted by all, yet too often, we fear, the comfortably placed congregations do not give that careful, prayerful and sympathetic thought which ought to be given, to Home Missions. It is well to draw the attention of members of the Church to the details of the work carried on by this Committee. It certainly lies at the door, but that very fact may, and, as a matter of fact does, render it less attractive to some, while the interest of others can only be aroused by stirring questions involving controversy.

The peaceful drudgery of Home Mission work is a severe test of the Christian character. Beginning in the heart it extends to the home, to the work-shop, to the society one mingles with, to the waifs of the street, to the poverty stricken tenements, to the squalor, destitution, improvidence and vice of the urban and to the trusted indifference of the rural communities. It spreads to the congregation, and to the large and numerous unoccupied fields of the church at large. It may be largely a personal work, man and woman working by precept and example as well as by the purse. Nothing for the true laborer can be found within the vineyard as interesting as this. The possibilities are marvellous. One has but to think of brothers and sisters, of friends and neighbors, of the reflex influence of work which has been manifestly blessed, to realize the blessed scope afforded in the Home field. It is a field in which every christian man and woman can work individually with the Triune Father alone as master, His Word as guide, His command as authority. What individual ought to try to do for individual, the Church as a whole tries to do for the country, and in proportion as is the interest of the individual in the individual will be the interest of the individual in the wider field.

But a perusal of the proceedings at the meeting of Committee will reveal the fact that the Committee is not supported as it ought by the membership. We are perfectly well aware that times are hard. We have had

our share of hard times ourselves; so have other journals and business ventures and indeed almost every body. Yet we must not blame hard times for a deficit which is embarrassing to the work of our Lord and Master. There is money in plentiful abundance in Canada. There is no doubt of it. It would be to trifle with facts to say otherwise. There is more money spent in high wines in some of our cities, in a month, than Dr. Cochrane requires for the deficit in this year's income. There is abundance of money for vicious indulgences, for luxuries and unnecessary comforts, and it is a deplorable state of things when these outweigh the conversion of the brothers and sisters of our own country. Let us have economy all round, but, as a result let our offerings to the work of the Lord be increased. There are members of the Church to whom economy in their manner of living would prove an undisguised blessing, physically, intellectually and morally; it would be no hardship for them to cut down their personal and household outlays by one half—it would be a kindness to themselves. But they cry out "Hard times." They take refuge behind any sort of cover; but it is in vain for them to shirk their plain duty. It has probably daved upon the Committee that this class of church members is in need of a considerable amount of Home Mission effort. Too often does the burden fall upon the shoulders of the poor man. It is everyman's blessed privilege to give of his substance to the Lord, and the widow's mite is of as sweet savor in God's sight as the rich man's thousand. The poor are not to be relieved of their duty, but it ought to fall as lightly as possible upon them. On the other hand, those to whom God in his merciful providence has given worldly store are bound by every christian tie, by their stewardship to God, by the love of Christ for sinners which they profess to share, to deal liberally with the Church agencies who are doing the Master's will.

Union of the Scottish Churches.

Once again the cry for Presbyterian Union is heard in Scotland. This time as oft before the contracting parties are the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church. The proposal has evoked opposition and criticism from various quarters. There is a small section in the United Presbyterian Church opposed to union because the Free Church does not repudiate the principle of State connection, even in the abstract. Then there is a section, considerably stronger than that in the United Presbyterian body, in the Free Church opposed to union because the United Presbyterian reject the doctrine of a State Church. And still more, there is opposition from the Established Church, presumably because a union would render the United Church a compact and formidable body menacing the peace and existence of the State privileges. This latter section is led, among newspapers, by the *Scotsman* one of the most enterprising and able whig journals in Scotland. This is how it interprets Principal Rainy's position in the matter: "Dr. Rainy has gone back to his old love, because Disestablishment has cheated him—it is as far off as ever. The new movement for union with the United Presbyterian Church is evidence that the Principal sees that the Disestablishment agitation is a failure." The strong feeling of hostile rivalry which exist between the three leading churches in Scotland, is to be greatly deplored.