

"After six months' stay in the country, . . . I must candidly say the prospects for the advancement of Congregationalism are not very bright. I think if we have patience enough, and are satisfied with small things, we shall have gratifying success in some places. As things are now our growth can neither be rapid nor great for years. Here, in Portage la Prairie, we have a difficult problem to face. We have a few earnest souls, but we have little growth; in fact, it has been rather the other way, as some of our people have left town since we began our work here. I should like the friends in the east to know as early as possible how we are situated, and so to understand what to expect in the way of progress. . . . I am satisfied that our coming has been made a means of blessing in the town. We have cause for thankfulness that our labour is not in vain."

Mr. Gerrie writes, later on, a little more hopefully of the prospect at Brandon, but says we shall have to be "content with slow progress." He sends the following suggestions in regard to the points in the west:

"I went over from Brandon to Rapid City. Rapid City has a population of 300 souls all told, and has four Protestant churches. I don't propose adding another to the list at present. The city, however, covers an area of perhaps nine square miles, more or less, so that there is *room for growth*! Mr. Rogerson (formerly of Owen Sound) has been doing good work in holding meetings in school houses round about the place, but other denominations are beginning to take up his points. I came in a south-easterly direction from Rapid City to Carberry, walking when I couldn't get a ride. Out on the plain, between the two places, I met a Congregational minister from England, a graduate of Nottingham Institute, who came to this country for the sake of his health, and is farming on the prairie. He, too, has been holding meetings in school houses in his neighborhood; but, like our friend Rogerson, is being crowded out by others.

"Carberry is a busy little town, a great grain market. Some day, if we watch, we may find something to do there. . . . There are three points in Western Ontario to which I would like to call the attention of the Miss'y Society, as possible places in which to begin work some day. One is Port Arthur, which has now a population of 6,000, and, because of its position, must come to be a place of importance. Another is Rat Portage, which, although not large now, has one of the best water powers on the continent, and will, doubtless, in time, become the Minneapolis of this North West. The third is the Canadian "Soo" (Sault Ste. Marie); I do not know much of this, but it is attracting considerable attention just now."

Pilot Mound and Wood Bay.—Mr. McKinnon continues his labours in this wide field, and the committee has renewed the grant for another year at the former amount. In a letter written shortly after the last annual meeting (1887), he reports a growing interest, especially at Wood Bay, where they greatly need a house of worship:

"The house in which we are accustomed to meet to worship God is getting to be too small, but seeing that we have no means that would enable us to go on with the work, we have to wait for a while. I do not like to ask aid through the columns of the *Independent*, but if some one else would do so it would greatly encourage and please me."

A little later on, he reports:

"We could begin in almost any place if we had men and means to carry on our work. What we should do is what others are doing, begin preaching and in due time a church could be organized. People from all parts, and from all denominations have settled in this country, and there is scarcely enough to be found of one denomination in any settlement to be able to provide for a minister,