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Foreign Missions

OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA.
(Historical.)

WE find the following historical account of the Foreign Missions of our Church in the *Gospel in all Lands*, 10th April, 1884. Published by Eugene R. Smith, Baltimore U. S. :—

The Presbyterian church in Canada is one of the youngest regiments of the line. Like other young housekeepers, it has its hands pretty full at home, having the responsibility on its shoulders of looking after what is probably the largest home mission field of any church in existenee, a task all the more difficult in that the population is comparatively small and very widely scattered. And yet this stage has its advantages. We have not had time to get into any very bad "ruts," and we have the buoyancy of youth and some of its hope, ardour and enthusiasm. The extent of our home mission field will be best understood by comparing the provinces of the Dominion with some other countries. The Maritime Provinces are together larger than Great Britain and Ireland. Quebec Province is as large as France. Ontario is equal in area to Spain. Little Manitoba is bigger than Holland. British Columbia has as many square miles as Austria. The Northwest Territories are capable of supporting as large a population as now inhabits the Russian Empire. But, so far from being on this account either incapacitated or crippled, our experience in the past has been that the more we have done for the heathen the better we have prospered at home.

You are aware that our Church dates only from the year 1875, when, after four

or five years of anxious negotiations, the Supreme Courts of the then four Presbyterian Churches in the Dominion met in Montreal and severally resolved to unite themselves into one church. The whole number of ministers thus brought together was about 600, and of congregations upwards of 1,000. It is worth mentioning that the first union of Presbyterians in any of the colonies took place in Nova Scotia in 1817, when the Burghers and anti-Burghers united under the name of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia. In 1860 this body united with that commonly known as the Free Church in the Lower Provinces; in the following year occurred the union of the Free Church with the United Presbyterian Church in Ontario and Quebec; and it was because the Presbyterian Church in Canada fell heir to the foreign missions that had been established in these uniting churches that our missions are so widely separated as they are.

We have five distinct fields: (1) The New Hebrides in Polynesia; (2) Trinidad, West Indies; (3) Our mission to the Indians to the Northwest Territories of Canada; (4) Mission to Formosa, China; and (5) Our mission in Central India.

The smallest of the churches, in one of the smallest provinces, was the the first to embark in the foreign mission enterprise. But that is nothing new, for it seems to have been so ordered from the beginning of Christianity. This seems, however, to have been the first instance in modern times of a colonial Church, as such, engaging in this work. In worldly substance it was poor, but it was rich in faith. That such a church would think of undertaking mission work while many within its own bounds were ill-supplied with the means of grace, appeared at the time to most people