

HOME MISSION WORK OF THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

This work within the last few years has rapidly increased until the Mission Funds have been exhausted and the Committee have had to borrow. In addition to the ordinary work of former years the British Columbia Field has been transferred from the Foreign to the Home Mission Committee and this, together with the expanding of the work in Manitoba and in some of the more recently settled townships of Ontario and Quebec, has made extraordinary demands on the Home Mission exchequer. These are the circumstances which have led to the publication of a paper read before the Presbytery of Chatham, by Rev. Robert H. Warlen, from which we present the following extracts :

1. We need greater facilities for exploring and opening up new Mission fields.

In some of our Presbyteries, as well as in several districts beyond the limits of our Presbyteries, it is a difficult matter for settled ministers to undertake this work and give to it sufficient time and labor. Were one or more efficient men set apart for this particular work, we are confident many new fields might be opened up. Laboring in co-operation with Presbyteries and with the Home Mission Committee, they might also do much to foster and work up weak stations.

2. We need, for the successful working of our Mission Stations, more permanent supply than at present is obtained.

Every one acquainted with the mode of working our fields, cannot fail to perceive that frequent changes in the laborers and frequent vacant Sabbaths have an injurious effect upon their growth and prosperity.

More permanent supply might be procured were the Assembly to enact that students are ineligible for calls until one year after being licensed, and that year be spent in working up one, or, at furthest, two of the Mission fields of the Church. We are sanguine, were such a law in operation, that many of our students would thus work up a field for themselves, in which, at the expiry of the year, they would become the settled pastors.

3. We need some Committee (or other authority) invested with power to send particular men to particular Mission fields.

In our present system there is too little of this principle of adaptation. The Home Mission Committee assign men to Presbyteries, not to special fields (with a very few exceptions.) Presbyteries assign men to

fields, but, there being only two or three men assigned to each Presbytery, they often do not get the kind of men adapted for their special fields of labor. In connection with this we observe,

4. We need to invest our Home Mission Committee with power to give higher grants than they now do to special fields, and to invite to these, ministers in settled charges, if other suitable men cannot be procured. Some fields require, for their efficient working, men of proved gifts and of the highest qualifications, and, in certain cases, even men of experience.

The field may be some prominent point where it is necessary that our Church should be well represented, and where it is most desirable that one of our foremost men should be placed. Now, it is not right to expect such a man to labor in such a field in comparatively straitened circumstances, or upon a stipend very much less than he could easily procure in older congregations of our Church. The Church should be able to hold out some inducement to men of highest gifts to labor in such fields for a lengthened period, either as missionaries or permanently as settled pastors. Other branches of the Church do so, not only in Canada, but also in Britain. The Free Church of Scotland, at its last General Assembly, took a great step in advance of previous years regarding grants to enable new congregations to be formed in certain localities.

Were such a plan in operation and some of our best men laboring, in the kind of field referred to, it would very soon break down the feeling which does exist in the minds of many of our ministers and Probationers against accepting calls to supplemented charges. Again, were financial inducements held out to them, many of our probationers would prefer to give themselves for a period of six or twelve months, or even longer, to working up a mission field, rather than travel through the country from one vacancy to another, like birds of passage, ever on the wing.

5. Not only would it be conducive to the Church's growth to increase the grants made to supplemented charges, but also to increase the number of these supplemented charges. At present it is necessary that a congregation should be able to raise \$300 per annum, before it can call a minister. It would be to the advantage of the Church to empower the Home Mission Committee, in special cases, to encourage Mission stations to call, even though unable to raise \$300, the Committee granting to such stations a supplement sufficient to support a settled pastor.

6. The Church needs more laborers, and it is a question of great importance—how are these to be got? It is not our purpose