

CHURCH and HOME

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Home Missionaries.

In the early history of our church every minister was more or less a Home Missionary—that is, his field of labor was wide; the distances between stations was long; our people were sparsely settled over large sections of country; many settlements were reached only once or twice in the year, and others were not overtaken at all. The laborers were few, but did noble service. Long journeys were made on snow shoes, horseback, or on foot over snow drifts, over roads which were impassible for carriages, and often times where there were no roads, save a track blazed on the trees through the woods. The weather, however stormy and severe: the deep mud, the heavy falls of snow, the deep rivers, the mighty forests, the biting frost, did not daunt these men. So far as possible did they travel the Maritime Provinces that they might find out our people and bring the means of grace within their reach.

There are fields to-day in the Province of New Brunswick which tax the strength and energy of the missionary, but there is upon the whole a marked contrast to what they once were. Good roads traverse all sections of the country and railways open up the

whole length and breadth of the province. Long drives there are still, but no great discomfort is experienced. The fields are divided and arranged so that the preaching stations can be readily overtaken and regularly supplied. We hear of hard work and long journeys, but if we look back to what some of our ministers were accustomed to do, we will see that our work to-day is comparatively comfortable. It was not unusual for a missionary to supply six or eight stations in a section where three services had to be conducted every Sabbath, while traveling 25 or 30 miles and attending to as many services during the week. There was neither Augmentation nor Home Mission funds to draw on. No doubt there are what are called hard fields still, where the people are widely scattered and the journeys long, but these are the exception, and even these are not so large but can be worked in a satisfactory manner; besides men are not appointed to fields without provision being made for a reasonable salary. Missionaries in the Maritime Provinces are not asked to work and starve. True, there is no chance to grow rich, but there is a reasonable chance to make ends meet, with economy. The missionary who goes out expecting to pay old debts and accumulate a large library in a few