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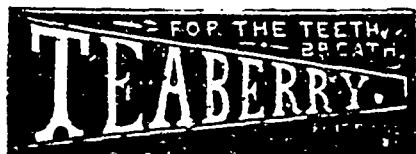
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GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

(Continued from page 373.)

promise." "But," continued the dying man," he said, "you know we never had a missionary here, and when the sheep have no shepherd they are apt to go astray. If we had a minister to remind us of God and home, to connect us with all that is purest and best in the past, so many men would not have lived and died here as they did. Now I want you to promise me that you will do your best to get a minister, and if you do so I will die in peace." What, sir, could I do? We don't speak much of Providence in this Western country but if there is such a thing it seems to me that my meeting you in this way is providential. Will you not help me redeem my pledge? There are between 3,000 and 4,000 people up there, more than one-half of them are of Presbyterian parentage and we have no missionary of any Church." A Highlander from Cape Breton is among them now.

"But all these people have their Bibles?" So have all the people in the Dominion; and the argument that would leave the people of the West with their Bibles would silence every pulpit in Canada and dismiss every minister. And experience has shown that left without a preached gospel the people perish.

"But what of overlapping?" There is some but less than is commonly reported; and the returns made to the Assembly show value for money spent. No good money is thrown into muskies. But when overlapping takes place why is it supposed that our Church is always the offender? I do not hesitate to say that in this regard we offend less than others. But if we occupy a field—and in a number of districts we represent Protestantism—organize a congregation and build a church, and after a year or two another denomination with fewer adherents appears on the ground, are we to sneak away as if guilty of a serious breach of Christian comity in going there at all? Work in a new country must not be done in this way else all progress will be arrested. A timid, questioning, hesitating, penurious policy can win only contempt and defeat.

Moreover Presbyterianism represents principles that have done man and religion rare service in the past. Are these not to find expression and exposition all over the West? Are they not to play their part in shaping the national life? Let overlapping be reduced to a minimum but let no deserving group of Presbyterians be able to complain that their Church has forsaken them or suppressed her principles to save her pocket.

IV.—1. There are many encouragements. Since the Union, twenty years ago, over two hundred missions have become congregations, several of which are influential and helpful. Under the charge of the committees are four hundred missions still, with twelve hundred stations; and, year by year, we may expect ten or a dozen fresh congregations to be given to the Church. Connected with these missions are one-sixth of the families of the Church and one-ninth of her communicants. And this work is growing. The missions are double the number of twenty years ago and the stations treble. The largest advance, it is true, has been in the West; but there have been gratifying gains in the Maritime Provinces, along the Ottawa and in the Algoma and Muskoka districts. Twenty years since, we had one feeble Presbytery in the West and now thirteen with a request that another be erected; and our preaching places have increased from thirty-five to eight hundred and eighteen, and our communicants from 500 to 10,000. The gains East and West have increased the strength of the Church, enhanced her prestige, and enabled her to undertake and carry out work that otherwise would have been beyond her power.

2. It is encouraging to know, too, that spiritual life in our missions seems to be deepening. For some years after the Union there were only from eighty to eighty-five communicants for every one hundred families. The proportion of communicants steadily rose so that now there are one hundred and twenty communicants for every one hundred families. In the whole Church the communicants are about double the number of families.

3. The work though difficult has been bracing. From no point have we been obliged to retire. As of old the Gospel has proved itself to be the power of God unto salvation.

A missionary sent to a mining district found a determined set made to drive him away. Sabbath services held in the open air were repeatedly broken up and there was no redress. The calm determination, cool head and warm heart of the missionary secured friends in time, a church was built, and now, after four years, the people apply for organization as a congregation; and they hope to become self-sustaining in the near future.

Another missionary on reaching his field discovered that no one would lodge him. He found a bed under a lumber pile. In two years a church and a manse were built and a good cause organized; and when leaving, over two hundred accompanied him to the ship.

To a new village a recent graduate was sent. After trying the work for a month he asked to be relieved saying that it was useless to attempt establishing a mission there. Another man took his place and was promised \$200 a quarter for two years. At the end of the third quarter he wrote "Send no more Home Mission money, the people here think they can support me, and I am willing to trust them." Nor was he disappointed. To-day we have there a strong congregation.

To a coal mining town a visit was made and notices posted for a service at 2 on Sabbath afternoon. No one attended. The service was postponed till 4, and the people called on and invited personally. Out of a population of from 1,200 to 1,500 only six appeared. In two years a church

and a manse were built; and the congregation in three years and a half became self-sustaining. It now provides the supplement for another mission.

4. The gospel is making its power felt everywhere. In the whole prairie section the people frequent the house of God as they do in the East, and if in the Pacific Province things are not so satisfactory, our neglect in the past is somewhat to blame. The religious barometer is rising, however. There is everywhere great freedom from crime—such freedom in the mining districts as to surprise Americans. Large as was the harvest last year, and difficult as it was to get help to take it off, not a sheaf was cut, stacked, or threshed on Sabbath between the Red River and the Rocky Mountains. The conditions south of the line were in marked contrast. Shall we not maintain and extend this power that makes for righteousness, sobriety, purity and the reign of law and order?

There is encouragement in the wide field with its promise of growth and people. The theatre is roomy and the outlook cheering.

The settlers are from good strains; they are intelligent and industrious, and, except in a few spots, religious. They realize the value of their heritage and they can be depended on to make its future worthy of themselves and their lineage. Unlike Indian and other weak races they have a future and money spent in planting Christian institutions among them will prove a good investment.

I would not be true to my own convictions if I did not bear testimony to the worth of the men who are doing the work of the Church on the frontier. To them under God the success in the past is due. Theirs has not been an easy task; but I fear that their service has received scant recognition. Many of them are men of scholarship culture and preaching power, but they have too frequently been scrimped and pinched. On the frontier there is no respect for the cloth and you cannot conjure with the Church. There is respect for men, men with conviction and knowledge—men true to God and helpful to man. Such are many of your missionaries. Let us all show our appreciation of them by making their lot a little more pleasant than it has been of late years.

Nor could I close without bearing testimony to the valuable work done by other Protestant denominations. The Methodist Church shows the same zeal in the West that secured her proud position in the East. The Anglican Church has been active and enterprising beyond precedent. Ritualistic practices have unhappily divided her people in some dioceses; Canadians generally prefer low Church while Englishmen have a liking for high Church services. So exclusive are these newcomers in this regard that they will scarcely attend any church but their own. A sojourn in Canada will no doubt modify their views. The work done by the Baptist and Congregational churches is limited in extent but earnestly prosecuted. The Lutheran Church is also planting missions but there is a Unitarian taint in some quarters that is not quite reassuring. Grace be to all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

The reasons for the prosecution of Home Missions are many and strong. God has given us a goodly heritage let us assist in making its institutions stable and its future safe. Education and religion are our best helpers. A large proportion of the settlers in the new districts of the country are Presbyterians—they are our children and have a claim on our sympathy and assistance.

Some of our sons will undoubtedly find a home on the frontier as the problem of living for many in the East is becoming more difficult of solution. Shall we not help to make their future place of residence clean and sober?

If the object of mission work is to save souls here and hereafter, where is there a field that promises larger returns if effectively worked, or that threatens more lamentable ruin if neglected, than this same frontier, where now so many religiously trained in youth are to be found?

And if the Church is to gather strength for work at home and abroad let her not neglect new settlements. Is neglect not writ large over the whole of Eastern Canada from Cape North to Port Arthur? Do we need to write it once more over the fair West?

And when the Chinese and Japanese come from across the sea they must not be obliged to search for a Christianity with a lantern. The influence of our Christianity should be so clear and strong that he who runs may read. So we shall speed the day when the kingdoms of the East shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see Thy righteousness and all kings Thy glory.

On the anniversary recently of the birth of the Rev. Dr. King, Principal of Manitoba College, the students invited him with Mrs. Watt, Miss King and Rev. Prof. McLaren to dine with them at the College residence. Mr. W. E. James, B.A., occupied the chair and proposed the health of Her Majesty. Mr. J. L. Small then in a happy speech congratulated Dr. King on having reached in good health another milestone on life's road, assured him of the confidence and affection of every student of the College and as a token of this begged his acceptance of a gold pencil and a travelling case. These were presented by Mr. Hector McLean, and Mr. Small concluded by expressing the hope that Dr. King would long be spared to continue his work. Dr. King made a feeling reply and short speeches were also made by Prof. McLaren and Rev. C. W. Gordon.

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Ministers and Churches

Several improvements were recently made to the church property at Dunsford.

Rev. Dr. McTavish, of this city, together with his family, will occupy a cottage at Sturgeon Point this summer.

Rev. John Neil, B.A., administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in St. Andrew's Church, King St. W., last Sunday morning.

The Rev. G. C. Patterson, M.A., and Mr. Patterson, of Embro, Ont., sail July 1st for the old country where they intend spending their holiday.

The Ladies' Aid Society of St. Andrew's Church, Thamesford, have purchased from the firm of A. & S. Nordheimer, Toronto, a magnificent upright piano for the Lecture Hall of the Church.

Rev. Dr. Milligan preached to the Toronto garrison on the occasion of their church parade at Massey Music Hall. There were over two thousand men in line.

The Ladies' Aid of the Presbyterian Church, Orillia, wish to acknowledge the receipt of a cheque for \$25 towards the Organ Fund from Mr. George McCormick, lumberman.

Rev. W. T. Herridge, B.D., the eloquent and distinguished pastor of St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa, will preach at both services in St. Andrew's Church, King Street West, next Sunday.

On the occasion of the anniversary service of Westminster Church, in this city, a week ago Sunday, the Rev. D. C. Hossack, LL.B., preached a powerful and striking sermon.

Rev. Principal King, D.D., is announced to preach in St. James Square Church next Sabbath morning, when he will doubtless be heard by an admiring gathering of his former parishioners. Rev. A. T. Love, B.A., of Quebec, will occupy the pulpit in the evening.

At a recent meeting of the Young People's Association in connection with the Presbyterian Church at Morrisburg, the programme was arranged by the President, Mr. W. A. Montgomery. The selections were not only varied and interesting, but ably executed by all who were called upon to take part.

The Rev. D. Y. Ross was inducted into the pastoral charge of St. George, on May 21st. Rev. Dr. Cochran presided and preached, Dr. McMillen gave the charge to the pastor, and Rev. E. Pettigrew addressed the congregation. A very cordial welcome was given to the new pastor.

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