

at that time on a visit to the Province, and afterwards of the Society, as well as of its then Agent for Lower Canada. After correspondence between the Eastern and Western Missionary Committees, a joint-committee of conference met in Toronto, in June 1853, and framed the draft of the present constitution, which was accepted, after amendment, by the Union of Canada West, in the same month, and by that of Canada East, in July. It was subsequently fully assented by the Colonial Missionary Society, and came into operation in the following October. By this constitution, the direction of the missionary business was put—or rather *left*—in the hands of the Union,—1. Because it, being composed mainly of the Pastors and Delegates of the churches subscribing to the Canadian portion of the funds, was the fairest representation of the membership of the Society that we could hope to obtain:—and 2. Because the Colonial Society preferred this channel, for the dispensation of their contribution to the common treasury,—to that of a public meeting of the Canadian subscribers, which would necessarily be composed, in practice, of the members of the Union and subscribers, in the place of meeting for each year. Thus, our plan seemed to be the most wise and just in relation to contributors both in England and in Canada: while many advantages were gained by abolishing all distinctions as to the source of missionary aid, and the medium of its dispensation, and the introduction of greater system and unity into the whole missionary work. The Missionary Committee being composed, as far as possible, of pastors and members of churches not receiving aid, is as disinterested a board as it is possible to constitute; coming from all parts of the country, they are neither locally nor individually a centralised body; while the important functions fulfilled by the Local Committees still further distribute the management throughout the entire denomination. So much in relation to organization.

DEPENDENCE ON MISSIONARY AID.

Let us now look at the work itself. We are still, for the most part, a body of missionary churches and pastors. About two-thirds of the whole number are dependent on extraneous aid. There is a progress towards independence, for once there was hardly a self-sustaining church in the country, but this progress is not rapid, nor, so far as I can judge, is it likely to be as rapid as we all desire, no less than our friends in England, and no one more than the Pastors and many—I fear it cannot be said, *all*—the members of the aid-receiving churches. We are not a great and popular denomination; we require larger subscriptions of our fewer adherents than many other bodies; and this tends to make them fewer still. But after all reasonable deductions have been made on these accounts, it still remains the fact, that there is in too many quarters a shameful indifference and illiberality in supporting the Gospel. Pastors are stinted, promising fields are left uncultivated, and the reasonable expectations—for they are not all unreasonable—of the Colonial Missionary Society are disappointed. No doubt, we suffer, and always shall suffer, from even the limited degree in which certain churches have been endowed by the State. That most disastrous measure engendered in a large body of the people, the habit of not giving and of not relying upon themselves, and as icebergs chill the surrounding ocean for miles, so these have lowered the whole tone of public sentiment in the matter. The endowed Churches can now offer a cheaper as well as a more fashionable religion to the people. Is the result to be wondered at, when we know what human nature is? Nothing but a thoroughly conscientious and self-denying attachment to our distinctive principles will sustain our cause. And it would be most unjust to many noble hearts from East to West, not to say, that there are a faithful few who labour and make sacrifices for Christ and His Truth, for whose sake our Missionaries are willing to endure hardness, and who ought to be supported by the material aid of those more highly favoured, both here and in Britain.

Notwithstanding all difficulties, however, *self-support* is the mark that should be aimed at by every church. A chronic condition of dependence is abnormal and unhealthy. We must constantly watch against the pauper-tendency, and be as jealous of our "independence" in this, as in some other respects. It must not be regarded as a matter of course that a Congregational Church in Canada is