

IN THE WESTERN SECTION.

QUEBEC covers a large area and affords scope for a great deal of Home Mission work. Twenty stations require supply: families are discovered here and there who have not been visited by a minister of the gospel for years. The work is beset with many difficulties and discouragements but is vigorously prosecuted. MONTREAL has its City Missionary, the Rev. James Patterson, and the city congregations contribute some four or five thousand dollars annually for mission work in the city, in addition to what is sent to the Home Mission Committee—last year it was \$3,163.05, and \$2495.11 for Augmentation of Stipends. OTTAWA has fourteen mission fields and thirty preaching stations. The Protestant population is rather on the decrease. LANARK and RENFREW presbytery has a large mission field, well manned and yielding good results. KINGSTON has no less than nineteen Home Mission fields under its care, and though the work is greatly scattered and many of the people in poor circumstances, the missions have been as successful as could be expected. TORONTO has eight mission fields outside the city and seven within. The amount contributed by the city churches for mission work apart from their regular contributions to the general Home Mission fund was \$11,454.58. The Presbytery gave \$8317.63 towards the Home Mission fund and only drew from it \$586. BARRIE:—This Presbytery has the oversight of the extensive mission fields of Muskoka and Parry Sound under the superintendency of Rev. Allan Findlay. The number of missionaries employed this summer is *forty-three*, of whom eight are ordained ministers. BRUCE has charge of the Algoma district—a very large, necessitous, and increasingly interesting mission district containing seventeen centres of operation and 63 preaching stations. The seven Presbyteries in the Synod of Manitoba and the North-West, extending from west of Lake Superior to Vancouver Island, constitutes a mission field nearly one half as large as all the others put together. It is in this vast region that *Dr. James Robertson* has laboured as superintendent of missions for the last ten years with remarkable success. We think we cannot do better than conclude this brief sketch of our Home Missions than by giving a few extracts from his last comprehensive report to the Assembly—reserving some further notice of Mr. Findlay's work for another time.

ABSTRACT DR. ROBERTSON'S REPORT.

The country west of the Rocky mountains may be said to be an extensive plain, one thousand miles wide, flanked by a tract of rough wooded country on the east and mountainous wooded country on the west. The district to the east, between Lake Superior and the prairie, is about four hundred and thirty

miles wide, and valuable chiefly for its enormous water power, its minerals and its forests. The district is rich in iron and vast quantities of cordwood, ties, piling and bridge timber are sent every year to supply the demands of the settlers on the plains to the west. One of the largest flouring mills on the continent is built at Keewatin, having a capacity of 1,200 barrels daily.

The prairie begins about thirty miles east of the Red River and extends in three plateaux for 1,000 miles to the Rockies. So level is it, and so gradual the ascents of the steppes, that a furrow might be ploughed from the Red River to the Mountains. In this plain are said to be 200,000,000 acres of pasture and farming land. Between the eastern edge and Moosejaw, along the foot hills of the Rocky Mountains, and in the valley of the North Saskatchewan, are found the best farming lands. Large herds of cattle, bands of horses and flocks of sheep are fed on the western ranges, and already the shipping of beef and mutton to Britain has begun in earnest. All the cereals raised in temperate climates mature in Manitoba and the North-West; and owing to the fertility of the soil the yield is large and the quality excellent. Coal is found over a large area, and at some places seams are estimated to yield about 15,000,000 tons to the square mile.

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

West of the Rockies lies British Columbia, a Province of extraordinary wealth in its minerals, fisheries and forests. There are extensive tracts of farming lands of great fertility, but yet the principal wealth of the Province lies apart from farming or grazing. The bays and rivers of the Province swarm with salmon, skil, oolachan, and herring, and seals and sea otters are found in considerable numbers in the northern waters. Should the 1,250 families of Crofters, arranged for from the north of Scotland, be planted along the coast, the fisheries will no doubt be speedily developed. The salmon catch of last season was estimated at five and a half millions of dollars. Gold mining has been carried on in British Columbia since 1856, and explorers and prospectors have proved that the precious metals are distributed over the whole Province. At Nelson one lode of ore was struck last winter that brought in sight at least a million dollars, and rich veins have been discovered at several points in that district.

STATE OF RELIGION.

It is difficult to judge of the religious state of so wide a Synod as ours, but it would seem from outward indications as if Christianity largely controlled the heart and life of the people. The Lord's day is well kept in all our cities and towns east of the mountains. Attendance on Gospel ordinances is general on the part of parents and children. The people