

FOREIGN MISSION ARREARS.

To the members and adherents of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, within the Synod of the Maritime Provinces :

DEAR BRETHREN,—At a meeting of the Foreign Mission Committee (E. D.), held in Truro, June 28th last, it was unanimously agreed to authorize the Secretary to prepare a statement setting forth the special causes of the deficiency of over \$7,000 in the Foreign Mission Fund, and have the same published in the *Presbyterian Record* and *Witness*, and also printed as a circular to be distributed among the Presbyteries.

It was also agreed to appoint several brethren, as deputies of the committee, to appear before the Presbyteries at their meeting in September and present the circular to them with an oral statement of the facts of the case, so that the whole matter may be fully before the Church previous to the meeting of the Synod in October.

It was further resolved to request the Synod to devote the whole of the sederunt on the second evening of its meeting to the consideration of Foreign Mission matters, and to aid the committee in a plan for the liquidation of the debt.

The following deputies were appointed: A. Maclean to the Presbyteries of Sydney and Inverness; A. Falconer to Pictou; E. Smith and J. K. Blair to Truro and Wallace; D. M. Gordon and P. M. Morrison to Halifax and Lunenburg and Shelburne; L. G. Macneil to St. John; Geo. Fisher to Miramichi; D. Sutherland to P. E. Island, and J. McMillan to Newfoundland.

In pursuance of the above action, the following statement is respectfully presented for your consideration :

In Trinidad in 1890 and 1891, the sphere of our missionaries' labours was greatly enlarged, and the cost of the work much increased over that of previous years.

The enlargement produced increase of expenditure in a two-fold way. *First*, by requiring the erection of a number of new school-houses, and *secondly*, by necessitating the employment of an increased number of native agents to carry forward the new work undertaken.

1. *The new School-buildings.*—Our Church began the work of educating and christianizing the Indian immigrants to Trinidad nearly twenty-five years ago, when there were but twenty thousand of them there, and when they were in the deepest ignorance, degradation and heathenism. From the first, the proprietors of estates, seeing the wisdom and zeal with which our missionaries conducted their work, and the benefit to the country that must follow their labors among the Indian people, gave encouragement and help; sometimes by a free grant of land for a school-house or church, sometimes in other ways; and for a number of years before 1891 the government of the country assisted the schools by the regular payment of "result fees." That is, the missionaries built school-houses of a required grade, gathered the children and taught them, and for every child that was able to pass an examination at the time of the inspector's semi-annual visit, a stipulated sum was paid by the government.

In the year 1890, however, the government passed a new School Ordinance, to come into operation at the beginning of 1891, which provided that any denomination of christians, Catholic or Protestant that would open up a school of a certain prescribed standard, might apply to have it taken on the list of government assisted schools; and, if so taken on, would receive for its support three-fourths of the whole running

expenses of the school, including three-fourths of the rental of the buildings; but that no help from government be obtained in any other way.

This ordinance, by prescribing a high standard for the houses of assisted schools, made the erection of new buildings in many districts necessary. Heretofore, in some sections rented buildings, not quite suitable, but better than none, were used. New buildings must now be secured in their place. Then, in all the new districts where schools had to be opened, new houses had to be provided. There were a number of such cases. They could not be put off. If we had held back from the work of erecting houses and providing schools, it would have been to the injury of the mission which we had undertaken.

Under these circumstances there was no alternative, if progress was to be kept in view. The schools must be opened; and to do so suitable houses must be provided, or the government would not grant its aid. Our missionaries very carefully considered the number of new school buildings absolutely necessary, and ascertained that \$10,000 would be needed to build them.

The list of these schools and the cost of them were laid before the F. M. Committee, and the committee, after long consideration and after writing to the missionaries to obtain fuller particulars than were at first sent, came to the same conclusion as the missionaries, and agreed to grant \$10,000 to erect these necessary houses. But where was the money to come from? The committee had \$5,000 on hand, the accumulation of several legacies, and it agreed to pay the first half of the \$10,000 out of this money, and to state to the Church, as it did in the report presented to Assembly in 1891, the whole case, and ask that the remaining \$5,000 be given by the people, as soon as possible. It is to be regretted that, as yet, this has not been done. Here we find the cause of \$5,000 of the debt now on the fund.

2. *Increase of staff.*—New schools meant additional teachers; new districts occupied, meant the employment of more catechists to work them; and competition created by some other work meant a small increase of the salary of native agents. This combination made it necessary to expend \$2,000 more in 1891 than in 1890, in carrying on the regular work. Besides this, Mr. Thompson, as our fifth missionary, commenced work then, and his salary additional, had to be provided. Thus we see how the remaining \$2,000 of the debt have been accumulated; so that we are now carrying a total indebtedness of \$7,000.

At the present time we have 5 missionaries, 4 Canadian lady teachers, 3 native preachers, 46 catechists, 56 schools with nearly 3,000 scholars, and a college for training catechists and preachers, with over 30 students, and a flourishing mission in St. Lucia, under the charge of four natives; and all at an annual cost to our Church of about £5,000, which is about half the total cost of the mission—the remainder being given by the native Church, the proprietors, and the government.

Is it too much to ask that the debt shall very soon be extinguished, and the \$21,000 necessary to carry on the work for the present year be contributed in full?

The following appeal was issued by the missionaries at the beginning of 1891, and is here with produced as confirmatory of the above statement, and as a cogent reason for prompt and increased liberality in this work.

P. M. MORRISON,

Sec'y F. M. Committee.