

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

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C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Editor and Proprietor.

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Letters and articles intended for the next issue should be in the hands of the Editor not later than Tuesday morning.



TORONTO, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1879.

HOME MISSION COLLECTION.

BY appointment of the General Assembly the annual collection on behalf of the Home Mission Fund takes place on the first Sabbath of October. In former years the collection was made several months later. Owing however to the large indebtedness of the Fund and in view of the urgent need of money in October to meet the claims of Presbyteries for the half-year ending this month, the collection was appointed to be made this year much earlier than usual.

The Committee appointed by the Assembly for the purpose have issued an appeal on behalf of Home Missions. This appeal will be read from the pulpit by all the ministers of the Church during the present month and an opportunity given to contribute towards this most important scheme. Upon the response made to the appeal will largely depend the future growth of the Church for several years to come. The amount required for the Western Section is as follows:

Debt in June last.....	\$11,000
Estimate for this year's work.....	35,000
	\$46,000

The membership of the Western Section is about 80,000, so that an average contribution of fifty-eight cents per member will suffice to make up the required amount. We do not believe that there are a dozen regularly organized congregations in the Western Section of the Church but are able to contribute this amount per member. Nay more, we do not believe that there are a dozen congregations in the Western Section of the Church but will contribute this amount *provided ministers and Sessions do their duty in the matter.*

We know that in many congregations there are some poor people—some who are unable to give much, if anything, for missionary purposes—but we do not think that out of the total membership of 80,000 in the Western Section there are one hundred who could not devise means to enable them to contribute at least fifty-eight cents each for the Home Mission Fund. The success of this appeal largely depends on the ministers of the Church, and

we do hope that no minister will be satisfied unless the contributions of his people reach the required average. To put off this appeal—in the present condition of the Fund and with the present urgent demand for the opening up of new fields—with an ordinary Sabbath collection would indicate a callousness and indifference to the well-being of the Church unworthy any minister or Session. A fortnight ago we suggested a plan which might successfully be adopted by those congregations in which there are no missionary associations. Let envelopes with blanks for the name of the donor and the amount of the contribution be distributed in the pews on the morning of the Sabbath on which the appeal is to be read. Let these be taken home, and returned the following Sabbath with the blanks filled and the contribution enclosed, and deposited in the collection plate. Those who from any cause may not be reached in this way can be waited upon personally and their contribution obtained.

Whatever the plan adopted, ministers and Sessions should see that the matter is not left to an ordinary collection, but that some more efficient method is employed of reaching the people.

In former years certain congregations have contributed nothing for the Home Mission Fund. This year every minister has to report to the Assembly, through his Presbytery, whether or not he has complied with the injunction of the Assembly as to reading the appeal to his people and giving all of them an opportunity to contribute to the Scheme. We cannot conceive any reasonable excuse for a congregation failing to contribute, and we have no hesitation in expressing our conviction that no minister should be tolerated in our Church who does not give his people the opportunity of contributing, and who does not urge them liberally to contribute, to all the Schemes of the Church.

A very important point in connection with the Home Mission appeal has reference to the time when contributions should be made. The Assembly has enjoined that the appeal be read on or before the last Sabbath of September, and the collection has been appointed for the first Sabbath of October. Among many reasons that might be given for contributions being made and forwarded at once to the Treasurer we name the following:

1. To enable the Committee to repay the indebtedness of the fund—which in June was \$11,000—and prevent the accumulation of interest.

2. To enable the Committee to pay the amounts due missionaries for services rendered during the half year ending this month.

3. To render unnecessary the reduction by twenty-five per cent. of the amounts due missionaries for the current half year's work. In April last the Committee resolved to deduct twenty-five per cent. from the grants for the half year ending 31st of March last, and also twenty-five per cent. from the grants for the current six months. The Assembly at its meeting in June did not homologate the Committee's action so far as the half year ending 31st March last was concerned. As to the Committee's resolution to deduct twenty-

five per cent. from the current half year's grant, the only action taken by the Assembly was "to instruct congregations to forward contributions to the Treasurer as early as possible, so as to warrant the Committee paying in full all grants, and to render unnecessary the reduction of twenty-five per cent. as contemplated by the Committee of the Western Section." Including the debt in June, about \$25,000 will be required in the beginning of October to enable the Committee to pay grants in full.

4. To render unnecessary the contraction of the work and the withdrawal from fields at present occupied. The Committee meets on the 7th of October to consider applications for grants for the ensuing year. All grants expire on the 30th of September, annually. It will thus be seen that the Treasury is empty, or worse still, if it be in debt on the 7th of October the hands of the Committee will be tied, and they may feel constrained to decline many urgent applications for the renewal of grants, as the Assembly has enjoined them in future to "equalize the expenditure and income of each year."

5. To enable the Committee to encourage Presbyteries to open up new fields. The Assembly has strictly enjoined the Committee "to entertain no new applications for grants until the state of the funds shall warrant them in so doing." No matter how urgent the application, or how very important in the interests of the Church to open up a new field, the Committee have no alternative unless the state of the fund at the time of their meeting will warrant them in making new grants.

These reasons suffice to show the urgent need there is of contributions being *at once* made on behalf of the Home Mission Fund, and not only made, but *forwarded* without delay. We earnestly trust that the appeal just issued by the Moderator will be instrumental in drawing out the liberality of our people to an unprecedented degree in all the congregations of the Church.

OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

ONCE more the schools throughout the country are in active operation. The holidays are over; everybody is satisfied with play, and ready to go to work again. Of course there will still be play to be had, after work is over; and perhaps there was some work to be done even during the holidays; but then it was much play and little work, while now it must be much work and little play. What a good time everybody had! The days were long and bright; the fields were covered with rich crops that waved in the breeze; the woods were fresh and green and shady; beautiful wild-flowers grew by the way-side; birds sang, bees hummed, butterflies flitted about, berries in abundance were to be found on the bushes, and—there were no lessons to be learned! The children have added to the stock of health and strength that they need in order to enable them to work hard at their studies during the fall and winter; and the teachers have returned to their arduous labours recruited and refreshed in body and in mind. Some people think that the time