

Efforts have been made by the Board during the year to effect settlements with congregations that had long-standing debts, and with considerable success. Doubtful loans have been greatly reduced, the Board accepting part payment when the congregation was unable to meet its full obligation. The Board found congregations anxious to effect settlements and willing to meet obligations as far as they were able. That nine congregations decided to become self-sustaining since last report is in no small measure due to the settlements effected. Payments on loans are now becoming more general and will hereafter prove a larger source of revenue to the Board. The list submitted in this report will show payments on loans.

The Canada North-West Land Co. continues to place the Board and congregations under deep obligation by granting sites for church edifices free of cost. Special thanks are due to W. B. Scarth, Esq., M.P., for the interest shown in this work. The C. P. R. Co. also has granted several free sites and made great reductions in other cases. L. A. Hamilton, Esq., Land Commissioner, has been most obliging. The Company has continued the policy of granting a rebate of 33 1/3 per cent. on all freight charges for lumber, and in some cases greater concessions still have been made.

Your Board are pleased to report that through the Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland the sum of £100 has been received for the work of church erection. It is to be hoped that the excellent example thus set may be followed up and that members of the parent churches may help to give visibility to Presbyterianism in the Lone Land. Large numbers of Scottish and North of Ireland immigrants are settling in this country, and to follow them with the gospel that made the Mother Land great is surely a duty and a privilege. The best thanks of the Board are due and are heartily tendered for this timely contribution.

The immigration to this country has this spring been the largest since 1882. Of the newcomers a large percentage are Presbyterians. They are increasing the strength of older settlements and extending the area of occupation. The Church must be prepared to extend aid to them in their efforts to erect places of worship.

To enable the Assembly and the friends of the Fund to know the character of the population it may be stated that according to the census taken by the Dominion Government in 1886 the three leading Protestant denominations stood as follows: Presbyterians, 23,406; Anglicans, 23,206; Methodists, 18,648; and that the rate per cent. of increase between 1881 and 1886 for these denominations respectively was 104.4, 69.2 and 98.7. The rate for the whole Province was 74.4. As stated in a previous report, 32 per cent. of the white population of the North-West Territories are Presbyterians.

For the purposes of this Fund very little money has been received except from Ontario. The Maritime Provinces have sent their sons and daughters to the North-West in large numbers and it is to be hoped that they may extend a helping hand in overtaking their spiritual wants. What the Hunter Fund has done for Nova Scotia, the Church and Manse Building Fund is intended to do for the North-West!

The settlement of many debts of long standing and the arrest of building during the winter account for the balance at credit. The building operations of summer will likely wipe it out.

To the generous friends—especially in Ontario and Quebec—who have given such valuable assistance in the work of church erection and extension in the North-West, we offer our cordial thanks.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

T. W. TAYLOR,

Chairman.

COLIN H. CAMPBELL,

Secretary-Treasurer.