

HOME MISSION FIELD IN NEW BRUNSWICK.

The following extract of a letter from one of the ministers in New Brunswick will give some idea of the necessities of the vast Home Mission field, and the need for more vigorous effort if the Presbyterian Church is to strengthen her stakes, and lengthen her cords in that Province.

"Now with a few words regarding the necessity of a Church Erection Fund to the future growth and development of Presbyterianism in New Brunswick, I will close this rambling letter.

And first I will refer to an example in the past, showing how the growth of Presbyterianism has been retarded by the want of such a fund, and then shew the need of some of our weak congregations and mission stations in the present.

A congregation not a great many years ago in a central part of our province was compelled to mortgage their church. After some time the mortgage wanted his money but the congregation was not able to raise it. They sent a deputy to Presbytery asking for advice and assistance, but that body not having any funds at its disposal were unable to do anything. The result was that the church was sold to meet that claim and the congregation turned out of doors.

That building now belongs to another denomination into the communion of which the greater part of the congregation, once Presbyterian, have gone. And now they have, I have been informed, the most flourishing congregation in the Province.

A Presbyterian congregation in Providence, R. I., last year, was similarly situated. Their church was largely in debt. They felt they could not meet their claims, and talked seriously of allowing their church to be sold when through the intercession of Presbytery the Board of Church Erection stepped in and gave them a grant which so stimulated the people that in less than six months they had paid every cent of their indebtedness.

We have also in our Province other churches which would either have decayed and fallen away, before they were completed, or been so under the auctioneer's hammer had not the pastors gone outside of their own congregations to solicit the funds necessary to complete the building.

And still further, we have within the

bounds of our Presbytery, the Presbytery of St. John, a young minister settled as pastor over a congregation which does not own a house of worship. Their pastor, an earnest and devoted young man, told me some time ago that they intended to make an effort to build a church but he feared the result as there were none in his congregation wealthy, and they found it pretty difficult to fulfil their engagements to him at present; they are either compelled to worship in school-houses, private houses, public halls, or await the convenience of other denominations which are kind enough to allow them the use of their churches for the time.

Then again we have groups of mission stations within our bounds where the work of our missionaries and catechists is greatly retarded for want of suitable houses in which to hold divine service; not only is their work retarded, but, in many instances, whole families, who have profited by their labours, are lost altogether to the Presbyterian Church for want of a home. Some of those groups of mission stations, were we in a condition to encourage them to build churches by giving them a small grant, would very soon call pastors and in a few years become self-sustaining congregations."

THE MAGDALEN ISLANDS.

Away in the Gulf of St. Lawrence situated 50 miles from P. E. Island and over 100 miles from Pictou lie the Magdalen Islands. They are said to be thirteen in number and were discovered by Cubot on St. Magdalenes Day, hence their name.

Upwards of 90 years ago several persons from Nova Scotia and some families the descendants of Acadian French emigrated to these Islands. Their situation as a fishing station being very favourable doubtless formed a source of attraction and induced these families to settle in this isolated region. Whilst their chief source of wealth lies in the sea yet there are fertile spots where grains and the potato flourish well though agriculture cannot be extensively pursued. Large quantities of fish are caught every season by American and Nova Scotian fishermen in which they are well remunerated.

The population is about 5000 who are chiefly Roman Catholics the Protestant portion numbering five hundred.

The spirit unit wants of the former are ministered to by French priests and schools have been established where the