

## UPWARD OF THREE HUNDRED YEARS.

and yet they are more needful, and receiving larger support to-day than they ever did before.

Few of our churches are long upon the funds of the Society—few as long as one I heard of last week, in connection with the largest Protestant body in this country—thirty years.

Churches that one hundred years ago were strong and self-supporting in England are now needing assistance, even in the very centre of the city of London; and perhaps they are doing more true missionary work than when they were crowded by the wealthy. If home missions are an absolute necessity in that old land, how much more in this new world, where the population is sparse and scattered, and the early settlers were poor?

Those who talk about the uselessness of home missions evidently know nothing about the state of society or the terrible conflict that is going on between truth and error at this moment.

Another consoles himself that "other denominations are doing the work." This is about the poorest excuse of all. How does he know that other denominations are doing the work? In point of fact they are not. I was in a part of the country last week where another denomination had sole possession of the ground for about thirty years. I speak advisedly when I say that so far as spiritual life is concerned the work is not done, and that the people themselves admit, and want a different work from what has been done among them. Other denominations cannot do our work, and it has been demonstrated over and over again that they will all do their work better for our presence. I do not advocate crowding in where the population is small and likely to remain small, and evangelical churches are already at work. Without doing that there are hundreds of places in our wide Dominion where if we were loyal to truth and to our time-honoured principles we would be working for Christ.

"Where are your missions?" another one asks.

## SEE THE YEAR BOOK,

which can be had for fifteen cents: there you have reports from many of the faithful, self-denying men who are toiling successfully all over the land.

In the Maritime Provinces there are

## TWENTY-FIVE CONGREGATIONS

depending on our missionaries for their religious instructions. Many of these would be wholly destitute of the means of grace but for our society. These congregations will average one hundred each—two thousand five hundred souls in these remote parts under pastoral care.

I can testify from personal observation that the missionaries are doing noble work. Scarcely a year

passes but they have revivals of religion, and but for the constant drain upon their members from the United States and the western parts of our own country most of these would be self-supporting long ago. These parts are seed plots for the West.

Our missionaries supply about ten congregations in the Province of Quebec; surrounded in some cases by Roman Catholicism or by other forms of error and superstition.

In the vast and progressive Province of Ontario our missionaries minister to nearly thirty separate congregations; only three in cities, others in villages and country places.

In Manitoba and all the North-West we have but one missionary, and he has five congregations, numbering from twelve to twenty families in each.

I have reckoned up about seventy congregations supplied by our missionaries. Most of these have church buildings, a few meet in school rooms. Now if any one asks what definite object they are to work for or give to, I reply, "to support the men who are preaching the Gospel to about

## TEN THOUSAND PEOPLE

in different parts of this immense country."

They are trying to live on salaries that average about \$600 a year, and out of this small sum many of them have to pay rents and keep horses to overtake their work. They are men of God, who have given themselves to the service of their Divine Master, the Church and their country; and they deserve to be known, honoured, loved and supported for their work's sake, and not grudged the poor pittance that is doled out to them. It makes my heart sad as I think of what some of them with large families have to endure. A word to the wise. Besides, we are not doing our share of the work in this new country. In Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, in Quebec and Ontario there are many places where the means of religious instruction is not supplied by any denomination, and many other places where there are good openings for our missionaries, but we are not able to move for lack of funds.

What shall I say of Manitoba and the North-West with British Columbia?

Since I wrote you last I have met four gentlemen who have been to Manitoba this past summer—men with their eyes open, capable of coming to a right conclusion on the subject of Christian work.

One is a leading minister in our denomination, who visited the country largely with the view to form a judgment on the subject. Two others, deacons in our churches, one an A.M.P.P. The fourth, a resident in Manitoba, a shrewd business man. These all agree that there is room and need for missionary work in Manitoba and the North-West.

I have a sheaf of letters from correspondents in