

enumeration, to whom I have often spoken of the Master, and for whose spiritual welfare I have earnestly striven,—perhaps not wholly in vain!

During the year that has just closed, our Communion Roll shows a decrease for the first time since I became your minister. How this unlooked-for result came about is fully explained in the report of the Session; nevertheless I profoundly regret it. If it should serve to draw attention to the fact that the thermometer of congregational life is exceedingly sensitive, especially in communities whence the residential population is steadily moving away, and that no church quickens its pace (or even merely maintains its pace) of its own momentum, some good will have been accomplished. During my pastorate, our roll has gradually risen from 529 to 915; but the unbroken stream of withdrawals has numbered, within the same period, no fewer than 340. Only by incessant labor has this constant leakage been met and overcome.

I congratulate you heartily upon the splendid financial showing of the past year; it is a long time since the measure of your abounding liberality reached the high level of 1899. It is true that the managers report a considerable deficit, but they had to include in their accounts this year items which aggregate over \$800 which do not properly belong to ordinary revenue and expenditure. In point of fact, your giving during the twelve months just past was larger than usual; but several extraordinary expenses had to be discharged. Happily you are not likely to confront any deficits in the future, seeing that your interest account is about to disappear. The Missionary Association's funds show indeed a real shrinkage during 1899, due chiefly to the uncertainty which has since led to the discontinuance of the MacGillivray Fund. And there is another explanation, not to be overlooked: several of the most liberal benefactors of the Association have lately been taken away by death, and some of these places still remain vacant! Who will volunteer to occupy without delay these honorable outposts?

And what shall I say touching the loyal help you have