

important, namely, the enormous extent of territory open to those who come as immigrants from abroad or who move westward from the older states and provinces; and the diversified character of these new settlers in regard to nationality, intelligence, religion and knowledge of municipal and public affairs. Notwithstanding the vast numbers who have spread themselves over the states and territories west of the Mississippi, there is room still for the population of an empire to be added; while in the Canadian North-West there is fertile territory larger in extent than the whole of Europe, excepting Russia, and capable of sustaining a population equal to that of the United States. Into these two countries the bulk of Europe's surplus population will pour for many years to come. The Dark Continent may get a share, and Australia has still room for millions more; but the mighty Gulf Stream of immigration that has been flowing westward for three decades cannot easily be checked or turned aside. Once this great influx of strangers was hailed with joy by the people of the United States; to-day it is regarded by many as the greatest danger that threatens the cherished institutions of the Republic. In Canada the rush has not been felt to any great extent, but it is coming, and all the more because of repressive legislation by the American Congress, intended to prevent the introduction of undesirable immigrants into that country.

But whether these unevangelized millions find homes north or south of the International boundary, the problem will be the same, the dangers the same, the remedy the same. If Christian civilization is to survive on this continent, the incoming millions of Germans, Scandinavians, Russians, Jews, Italians, *et hoc genus omne*, with their Old World ideas, socialistic tendencies, religious skepticism, and atrophied power of self-government, must in some way be fused at white heat and cast into the mould of a new national life. In this colossal undertaking minor forces will play their part—education, intercourse, commerce, political discussion, and a hundred things beside—but no one of these, nor all of them combined, can save American civilization from ignominious failure or disastrous eclipse. There is but one factor that can completely solve the problem, and that is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But if even this is to succeed, the Home Mission work of the churches must be done with a zeal, a wisdom, a thoroughness, and on a scale far exceeding the best work of the past. In the sudden rush of population into the Western States and Territories during the past few decades, it is scarcely to be wondered at that the churches were bewildered by the rapid and enormous demands made upon their resources, and found it literally impossible to keep pace with the requirements of the work.

There is no use in shutting our eyes to the truth. America including Canada, is not yet completely evangelized. Other forces than that of the Gospel hold sway. To-day Chicago is, for a time, the cynosure not only of "neighboring eyes," but of the eyes of all the world. She stands before the nations in a fiercer light than that "which beats upon a throne," the representative of all that is best in American civilization; but to the shame of many, and to the bewilderment of more, she dishonors her white shield with the "bar sinister" of a continental Sunday, defies alike the national law and the national conscience, and proclaims as openly as if inscribed in characters of fire upon every dome and archway that the Christian's God is dead and buried and that Mammon reigns in His stead. The Home Mission work of the churches cannot be regarded as finished until the thought and conscience of the people is so aroused and the law of God so recognized as to make the repetition of this huge blunder an impossibility.

To what extent have the churches kept pace with the growth and needs of the population? Some will say they have kept fully abreast; and statistics, read in a certain way, seem to support the claim. Thus it has been shown that during the century the percentage increase of church members has been far greater than the percentage increase of population, the latter having increased fifteen-fold (say 4,000,000 to 60,000,000), while the former has increased over thirty-seven fold (360,000 to 13,000,000). It is also claimed that there is, at the present time, in the United States, one evangelical minister for every 560 people, an one evangelical church organization for ever 370, while the ratio of church membership is one for every 4.70. Taken at their face value,

these figures seem to prove that the aggregate results of Christian effort, through Home Missions and otherwise, have been all that could be desired. But when we place the figures of the census alongside the facts as revealed in the present state of society and the tendencies of the times, it becomes at once apparent that some important factors were not included in the census returns—indeed, they could not be—and that this has vitiated the result. To guard against misapprehension, the writer wishes it to be understood that he is by no means disposed to take a pessimistic view of the situation—quite the contrary. The work of the century has been a grand one, almost justifying the remark of a recent writer that "we are living to-day in the midst of an evangelical conquest without a precedent and without a parallel." But still there is need to emphasize the thought that, for the thorough evangelization of this continent, the churches must push their Home Mission work on broader lines, with greater energy, and in a spirit of co-operation beyond what the past has witnessed.

Taking the figures already quoted as correct—namely, that there are in the United States one evangelical minister to every 560 people, and yet remembering that there are vast numbers almost untouched by an evangelizing agency, the conviction comes that there must be a very unequal distribution of forces, and that this, in turn, has arisen from the endless divisions and consequent rivalries of our common Protestantism. That very many localities, towns and villages especially, are overstocked with feeble churches and underpaid ministers is a circumstance too notorious to require proof. Time and again has the writer found villages of from 400 to 1,000 of a population with as many as three, four, five, and in one case eight, Protestant churches, where one was ample for the needs of the people, each struggling for an existence, and in many cases eking out its slender resources by drafts on the Home Mission Fund of its denomination. In Canada this source of weakness has been eliminated to some extent by the various union movements. Previous to 1874, there were six branches of Methodism and four of Presbyterianism; now there is one Methodism and one Presbyterianism throughout the entire Dominion. Suppose it were otherwise, and that four Presbyterian and six Methodist Churches were competing for a foothold among the sparse communities of the North-West, and the absurdity of the situation becomes at once apparent. I trust it may be said without offence that in the matter of consolidation and more equal distribution of forces, Canada has shown an example that the churches of the Republic would do well to imitate. It is said there are in the United States some sixty-seven distinct denominations, not a few of these maintaining substantially the same doctrines and usages. While such a state of affairs continue we must expect, in regard to Home Missions, the maximum of expenditure and the minimum of results.

For Shizuoka Church.

W. M. S., per Miss D. H. Holmes Holmesville	\$13 25
Mrs. J. M. Taylor, Peterboro	7 00
W. M. S., Rockwood	3 50
Richard Rook, Newburg	4 00
W. M. S., Paris	5 25
Mrs. W. K. Snider	10 00
Mrs. Caldwell, Portage la Prairie	10 20
W. M. S., Toronto Junction	3 25

SELF-DENIAL WEEK.

W. M. S., Ilderton	\$13 00
W. M. S., Addison	3 00
W. M. S., Thomasburg	6 35
W. M. S., Lakefield	9 00

THE other day a good brother called at the Mission Rooms to report income from his circuit. He regretted a falling off to the extent of \$50, but said, "We raised over \$50 for the Woman's Missionary Society, so we keep up on the whole." By no means. The loss to the general Society is just as great as if nothing had been given to the other. Suppose a hundred circuits do the same thing on the same scale, and we have a loss of \$5,000 on general income. Taking from one Society and giving to another is no gain whatever.