

on the ground and had numbers, influence and education on their side, do you wonder that in Canada so little progress was made when we came last on the ground, and had to labour under special disadvantages. When our missionaries came here, it was only in a few places that the way was open to them to enter without offering too manifest a spirit of unseemly rivalry. Moreover, the early settlers suffered much hardship, and were very poor in this world's goods, and therefore the Methodist itinerating system with young men accustomed to roughing it, and to live on scanty pay, while they travelled over large sections of the country, was peculiarly adapted to the needs and circumstances of the early age of this country. Not that the itinerant has an advantage over the settled pastor, on the contrary, the settled pastor remaining faithfully and devotedly at his post will have the greater success, and if he be the right man years will deepen the influence for good that he will have in the community; but if the church be subject to changes, if there are long periods of time without pastoral oversight, and especially if there should arise pastoral troubles, the advantage lies with the itinerating system. Another cause of weakness is the lack of emigration to this country of those of our faith and order. In this respect our churches in the U. S. have the advantage over us ever since the Pilgrim Fathers came, and though they were peculiar were a very good class of emigrants. It is remarkable, but none the less true, that few Congregationalists comparatively settle in the Dominion. It may be different now but it was the fact thirty years ago when, as a denomination, we began to labour here—the places where two or three families of Congregationalists were known to have settled were soon supplied with pastoral oversight, then the work became more difficult. Yet some of our best churches were planted where there was not a Congregationalist to encourage the first labourer. The Rugby and Vespra churches, concerning which I may speak with confidence, has not a member who was originally a Congregationalist, or who came to the country as such. The Edgar contained but one family who were Congregational before attending this church. This township of twelve miles square was mainly settled by Presbyterians, in fact it may be safely said that for one Congregationalist to the place there were 200 Presbyterians. Yet there are but three Presbyter-

ian and two Congregational churches here. Some of our churches are made up of Episcopalians, Methodists and Presbyterians. Had we the advantages that other denominations have had, or the U. S., we should have had a different story to tell. The third hindrance that I shall note is the lack of support from the Mother Country. The Colonial Missionary Society began well. During the first ten years of its operations twenty-five churches were organized. During the next ten years eighteen were added to the number, making a total of forty-three churches, *all of which report in the Year Book*; but after that the progress was exceedingly slow. It was unfortunate that the state and needs of the country were not better understood. It was a far grander work to Congregationalize Canada under the discouraging circumstances named than was imagined, and there was manifested much impatience for results.

The time of self-sustentation did not come as soon as expected, so there was dissatisfaction manifested and pressure brought to bear on the churches to do more. At the same time it was felt in many instances by those on the ground, and knew all the circumstances, that more could not be reasonably expected. So it came to be a question whether it were better to abandon certain churches, and lose the fruit of the labour of years, or keep on, receiving aid grudgingly given, or trying to do without it in the hope of reaching the point aimed at. Sensitive men regarded the dissatisfaction as implying a charge of inefficiency and left their fields. Others disliked to take up work abandoned under such circumstances, so the weak churches were left often months, even years, without any pastoral or fostering care, and if they were fortunate enough to obtain a successor, it took years to recover lost ground. Some were left to die, and the country is scattered with the wrecks of Congregational churches. Subsequent events here show the folly of too easily giving up places because the results do not come up to our expectations.

Some of our strongest churches to-day are those who were long on the mission field, and whose pastors remained at their post in spite of the trials and discouragements that might have driven others away. And as a rule the churches after reaching the part of self-sustentation, have repaid doubly the amount expended upon them. It is a matter of surprise when