

BABIES, BOYS, MEN, CHURCHES.

HOWEVER they may differ in other things, babies are alike in their helplessness. If they were uncared for by others, they could not live; old people would die, and there would be no one in the world; homes would be empty, empty, empty.

When children get able to walk, they still need help. To neglect them then, would be as cruel and wrong as to neglect their bodies, and would end in the same way.

When cared for through infancy and childhood, and grown to be men and women, they can make their own living, and in their turn help others who cannot help themselves. It would be very selfish, after being cared for when they were helpless, to refuse to care for others who need care.

All this is about as true of congregations as it is of people. There are baby congregations that will not grow if they are not helped; there are child congregations that need help; and there are grown-up, strong ones that can do for themselves everything they need.

BABY CONGREGATIONS.

Away out in the country is a pleasant, happy home. Half a mile distant is another, and a few more farther off. The settlement is small. They have no church, no pleasant Sabbath meetings; the young people, as they grow up, learn to spend the day in pleasure, and this often leads to a life of sin.

But why do they not have a church and minister? Because they are few and not rich. The minister must have something to buy food and clothing for himself and his family, and they cannot give enough to support him.

Then the larger, stronger congregations who are enjoying their pleasant Sabbath meetings, and many other good things, agree to help this baby congregation, and they pay money for this purpose into a fund which they call the Home Mission Fund. A minister who has no congregation, or a student who is preparing for the ministry, is sent to them for a time; they give what they can for his support; the Home Mission Fund gives them some help, their Sabbaths and week days are

made brighter, and the young people, and the old as well, are helped to live better lives.

When the autumn comes the student goes back to his studies, and there are more silent Sabbaths. Next summer another one comes for a time, and so on.

There are several hundreds of these baby congregations in our Church in Canada and the Home Mission Fund that helps them is doing great good.

CHILD CONGREGATIONS.

After a time the baby congregation grows stronger. New settlers come, and the older ones get better off. They are getting tired of so much change and of so many silent Sabbaths. They would like a minister of their own all the time; there would be a great deal more good done, but they are not yet strong enough to support one. Then the larger, stronger congregations agree to help them in this, too, and they put money into another fund, which they call the Augmentation Fund. To augment means to increase, and this fund is so named because it makes larger the sum which these people can give.

Then they choose a minister that they would like to have. They pay what they can for his support, and the Augmentation Fund supplies the balance.

After a time this child congregation gets larger and able to support itself, and then it does not need help, but begins in its turn to help other weak ones.

In this way, during the last dozen years, about 170 child congregations, or an average of about 14 each year, in the Presbyterian Church in Canada, have grown strong enough to care for themselves. Most of the congregations in our Church have at some time been helped, and thus there are to-day so many strong ones among them who are doing much to send the Gospel all over the world.

You now know what is meant by the Home Mission Fund and the Augmentation Fund. You see that they are specially suited to young people, and you see, too, how important they are, for if it were not for them the baby congregations and child congregations would never grow self-supporting. They