

withdrawn, and we are brought face to face with the fact that we are expected to stand alone.

During all these years

MUCH GOOD WORK

has been done, seed has been sown which has brought forth fruit to the glory of God, and our country is the richer and better to day for the efforts of those faithful toilers, so many of whom have gone to their reward. Several of the churches organized at the beginning of the work have been strongholds of Gospel truth for half a century, and have done much to forward the cause of civil and religious liberty in our own land. In some localities good has been done, for which we, as Congregationalists, do not have the credit, from the fact that others have come in and built upon the foundation which we had laid; but we believe that some day those who began and those who finish, shall rejoice together over work done in a common cause, for a common Master.

While we thank the Lord for what has been done, we cannot forget

THE DIFFICULTIES

under which the work has been accomplished, nor the burden of care which has so often rested upon those who sought to prosecute it. Bright hopes of success were too often followed by disappointment. It was hard to see promising fields open before them, upon which they were not able to enter for want of means, or some long-established mission given up for the same reason. Whether our people have always done all they might for home missions, I cannot judge, but one thing which I think has retarded our growth, as compared with other denominations, is the fact that we have received so few accessions from immigration. Congregationalists of England belong, as a rule, to the comfortable middle class, who do not emigrate. In other denominations the wealthy bring with them the means to support the church to which the poorer flock as the church of their fathers, so that in both numbers and money they have outstripped us. We are still, in Canada to-day, a little flock, yet I firmly believe, not without influence and a power for good, for the use of which God will hold us responsible. I do not believe that our usefulness as a denomination is done. The principles which we uphold are not dead. Let us be loyal to them, faithful to the trust Christ has given us, and, building upon the foundation already laid, carry on to perfection the work so nobly begun.

The practical question which faces us to-day is "What can we do to help?" First of all, as Congregational churches in Canada, whether self-supporting or mission churches, we need to take more interest in each other. The bonds of outward

organization which unite us are so very slight, that unless we are held together by the cords of Christian love and sympathy, we drift apart. This makes it all the more necessary that we do all we can to strengthen those cords.

THE FIRST STEP

is to know more about each other. Indifference results from ignorance; knowledge begets interest. We realize this in our foreign work, and we distribute missionary literature and maps, obtain visits from missionaries, and in various ways try to keep our people informed with regard to the work. Why not use the same means with regard to our home missions? I believe this is work which our Ladies' Auxiliaries might take up, and if it originated with them the whole church would feel the effect. As a Woman's Board we are organized to support the home-work as well as the foreign. Then would it not be well, if at our Auxiliary meetings we should spend a part of the time in a study of the home field? For want of proper maps let us make them ourselves, by procuring good railroad maps, learning in some way the locality of our different churches, and marking them in. Then let us study the history of these churches; writing to them if necessary for material. Some of them may be struggling against great difficulties. Many of the weak country churches have given of their best life to nourish and build up the city churches. It will do us good to know their circumstances and sympathize with them. If some of our churches are being blessed with prosperity, and are enjoying God's presence and His blessing upon their labors, it is well for us to know it, that we may rejoice with those that rejoice.

IF A REAL INTEREST

in our denominational work is thus aroused among us, it will surely follow that increased gifts will flow into the treasury, and our work be no longer hampered for want of means to carry it on. And as we give to the cause let us be more earnest in prayer to God for an out-pouring of His Spirit upon our churches. What we need most of all to strengthen our hands and encourage our hearts is a deep and thorough revival of religion, more confidence in our Almighty Heavenly Father, and in our personal loving Saviour, who has said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." We must have less of self, less of worldliness, more of Christ in our hearts, more readiness to undertake whatever task He has assigned us. Difficulties may be in the way, and dark clouds seem to hang over our path, but when through the workings of God's Spirit in our midst, we see precious souls being led to Christ (as we saw last week in our little church in Bowmanville),