

¶ The disbursements of this Fund have, as a matter of course, kept pace with its growth. The grants of aid to poor schools have advanced from 84 in the two years preceding the last quadrennium to 963 during the last quadrennium. Of these grants 398 were made during the last year. The amount of these grants to poor schools during the quadrennium has been \$6,419.34, as against \$1,646.65 during the previous quadrennium, an increase of nearly four-fold. The income received and aid rendered have steadily increased year by year.

Schools applying for aid are required, if possible, to contribute something toward the grant given them. In this way the schools assisted have during the quadrennium contributed, in part payment on grants, the sum of \$1,822.08, as against \$48.93 the previous quadrennium. The amount thus paid is regularly increasing, having reached \$829.39 during the last year, as against \$571.80 the previous year, and \$278.33 the year before. With each school receiving aid a separate account is kept, and part payment is required, except where the Board decides that the grant shall be absolutely free—chiefly in the case of new schools and very destitute neighbourhoods.

¶ The grants have been distributed through every province of the Dominion and Island of Newfoundland, especially in the regions of the Upper Ottawa and in the Muskoka and Algoma territory, in Manitoba and the North-West, and in the mining settlements of British Columbia. Many grateful testimonies have shown the warm appreciation with which these grants have been received.

This rapid growth of the operations of the Board has required on the part of its Secretary a very extensive correspondence, exceeding 3,000 distinct communications during the quadrennium, and over 1,200 distinct communications during the last year.\*

The Sunday-school Board also pays for the printing and mailing of all Sunday-school Schedules, Circulars, Reports, etc., prepared by the Secretary, and for express charges and postage on donations of Sunday-School Libraries.

About 10,000 volumes of second-hand Library books, donated by schools, have been gratuitously distributed during the quadrennium.

For these there are always several applications, and schools can do much good by sending to the Secretary their old libraries.

Within a very small fraction of the entire income of the Board is disbursed directly for the benefit of poor schools, there being no expenses of management beyond a small amount for postage and petty sundries of the kind. It is gratifying to observe that the schools throughout the Connexion are responding much more uniformly and much more liberally to the appeals made for this Fund. In so doing they are but fulfilling the exhortations of Scripture: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ;" they that are strong bearing the infirmities of the weak.

The magnitude of the Sunday-school operations of our Church, and the depth of the interest felt in those operations, is shown by the fact that during the year \$71,358.60 have been expended in the maintenance of those schools. When to this are added the amounts raised by the schools for missions and for the Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund, we reach a total of \$92,903.80, or an average of over 42 cents for every scholar in these schools.

#### PERIODICALS.

It is very gratifying to be able to report the very great increase in the circulation of our Sunday-school periodicals. That circulation, during the last quadrennium, has nearly doubled; the increase being from 103,729 on 30th April, 1882, to 194,074 on 30th April, 1886, or 87 per cent. This is more than three times the increase of the previous quadrennium.

The increase in circulation during the year ending 30th April, 1886, has been over 34,000. On the 31st of July, 1886, there was a still further increase, in the number printed, of 65,676, making an aggregate of 259,750 copies, or an increase since 1882 of 156,021, or nearly 150 per cent. There are now EIGHT distinct periodicals, of as many different grades, meeting the varied requirements of our schools; and they are now being printed at the rate of over thirty-five and a half millions of pages a year, 119,000 for every day, and nearly 12,000 every working hour.\* Of these periodicals there are 138 distinct issues in the 308 working days of the year, being almost one to each alternate

\* Correspondents would materially lighten the labours of the Secretary, if they would give distinctly their Post Office, Conference, and Province. Many letters omit all these particulars.

\* If to these be added the circulation of the *Methodist Magazine*, under the same editorial management, the aggregate circulation is over 40,000,000 pages a year, over 131,000 per working day, over 13,000 per working hour.