

more alive to their duty; never, as attested alike by the reports of our Catechists,—by the financial returns,—and by the observation of members of Presbytery, was there a keener desire to secure regular services. What chills, if it does not absolutely kill our efforts is, that, during the winter months, when the people are, on the whole, most accessible, the other denominations are busy, and often gather the harvest from the labours of our Catechists, who, the while, are at college. Thus, our work is a perpetual labour of Sisyphus. It is, no doubt, gratifying that additions are made to any branch of the Christian Church: but assuredly, our present sporadic system does not bear much fruit among us, as regards the extension and consolidation of Presbyterianism. Our general position is, that, unless we succeed in securing the services of a few ordained men to assist us in working our territorially, vast field, we are forced, with whatever reluctance, to submit that we simply cannot hope, humanly speaking, to make satisfactory progress. Each of our settled ministers has a certain portion of our unsettled field assigned to his care, and such time and attention as can be spared are devoted to the interests of the whole. But all this is, at least, only a make-shift arrangement, and does but stave off the evil day when one portion after another of our field must, unless labourers be secured, be abandoned simply because our better class of adherents shall have lapsed into these other denominations, while many are already tending to ward utter indifference. The mere fact of being subjected to a heterogeneous teaching has of itself an evil, because an unsettling influence. A religion composed of alternate layers of controversy and of a spurious revivalism, cannot be expected to prove a very substantial basis for a healthy morality.

During the past summer, the Catechists' returns attest that where the people's interest has been aroused, no difficulty is experienced in procuring money. We have, we think, ample reason to conclude that men of the right stamp would not be left unsupported, pecuniarily, in any of the groups referred to.

### Anniversary Meetings.

THE MONTREAL ANNIVERSARY MISSIONARY MEETINGS were held in Erskine Church on the evenings of the 22nd, 23rd and 24th November. The subjects discussed on the several evenings were, as usual,—Home Missions, French Evangelization, and Foreign Missions, respectively. Strenuous efforts had been made by the committee of arrange-

ments to secure the presence of speakers from a distance, presumably on the principle that the announcement of their names would "draw" crowded houses. But although they failed to induce any of the magnets to cross the line of forty five, nevertheless there was a good array of native talent on the platform: the speaking was very good, indeed, and although the attendance was not *quite* so large as last year there were fair audiences each evening, and much interest was manifested by those present in the statements that were made. "Fair audiences" did we say? Yes, but to be strictly honest we must add, *for Montreal*. The people of this great and flourishing city, with its seventeen or eighteen Presbyterian churches have not yet reached the point of enthusiasm in regard to missionary meetings. And Montreal, in this respect, is like a good many other cities and towns "where," as is sometimes said, "there are so many other attractions." One of our American exchanges says that "when the millenium comes, the masses of society will probably take as much interest in the evangelization of a nation or tribe, as it now takes in a horse-race: and the British parliament will adjourn for something nobler than a 'Derby.'" Our hope is that, even before that time, intelligence and culture will discover that once in a while, at least, it may find as pleasant and profitable entertainment at the missionary meeting as at the theatre and other fashionable places of resort. We have some four thousand communicants in Montreal, and yet we have to characterize a gathering of four or five hundred people as "a fair audience" at a missionary meeting!

### HOME MISSIONS.

MR. J. MURRAY SMITH, in the absence of Mr. David Morrice, through indisposition, occupied the chair at the first meeting and led off with a few well-chosen remarks. The work of Home Missions took precedence, he said, in this series of meetings, and rightly so. It lies at the foundation of all Christian effort, and just in proportion as the Church does its duty faithfully at home has it reason to expect that the other departments of its work shall prosper. The work given the Presbyterian Church in Canada to do within its own borders was a great work, demanding its best efforts and our united and sustained liberality. Much of that work lies very near our own doors. In every congregation, and in all the Presbyteries there is a need of Christian effort. In those nearer portions of the field every one may find something to do. In regard to the more distant and the more destitute parts of the country, they would learn from others of the vast field opening up in the North-West Terri-