

tributed to poor schools. During the last three years nearly 400 new schools have been organized, chiefly in remote and destitute places, through the agency of this Fund. During the last quadrennium the missionary collections of the schools increased from \$14,701 during the first year to \$20,762 at its close. During the year before last they have still further increased to \$25,526, and during the last year to \$27,915, nearly doubling in six years. Very many testimonies are received from all the Conferences reporting the great good that has been accomplished by the S. S. Aid Fund in establishing and sustaining Sunday-schools, where without its help they could not exist.

The number of scholars reported is 210,824, an increase of 13,286 on the previous year. The increase in teachers and officers is 916. During the last Conference year 41,476 are reported as having signed a pledge against the twin evils of liquor and tobacco. The number of books in the libraries of the schools is over a quarter of a million. The most pleasing feature of all in connection with the annual report of the Sunday-schools is that the lessons therein taught have, under the blessing of God, resulted in the conversion of 11,550 of the scholars; 34,037 scholars are meeting in class, and 32,222 are studying the catechism. While this is highly gratifying, still there is urgent need for the more thorough and systematic study of that important compendium of Biblical truth—the Methodist Catechism.

The magnitude of the Sunday-school operations of our Church is shown by the fact that during the year \$77,544 have been raised for school purposes; when to this is added the amounts raised for missions and for the Sunday-school Aid Fund we reach a total of \$107,711, or over 50 cents for each scholar. The increase in the circulation of our Sunday-school papers has been very great. We are now printing an aggregate of 305,750 copies, an increase of over 21,000.

In every case it will be remembered that even the poorest school is expected to pay what it can toward the grant of papers made. Last year the schools receiving help to the amount of \$3,468.57 contributed in part payment therefor \$1,403.17. Supplying just such needs as these all over the continent, from Labrador to the borders of Alaska—and helping to plant new schools wherever a handful of children can be gathered together, and a loving heart to point them to the Saviour—is the work that the Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund is doing.

A New Departure.

At the meeting of the Sunday-school Board last year a suggestion was made for the publication of a racy and readable periodical of higher grade than any now published for our schools, for the use of senior scholars and for circulation, where preferred, instead of Sunday-school libraries. The great expense of establishing another high class periodical, in addition to the dozen already officially published by our Church, prevented the Book Committee from undertaking the venture. But the suggestion has been made to adapt the *Methodist Magazine* still more fully for Sunday-school circulation. Already a considerable number of schools have found it admirably adapted for that purpose, and have been largely using it both in bound volumes—three numbers in each—and in circulating single copies. Some schools have thus taken as many as ten copies. Their great variety of contents; their interesting character, and the number of attractive engravings, make them particularly suitable for this purpose.

A new departure now being made will make them still more so. The *Magazine* for 1890 will be printed in a new and handsome type, a size smaller than that heretofore used, but still clear and legible. This will give room for an increased amount of specially interesting and attractive reading. Another feature which will make this magazine specially valuable to senior scholars and Sunday-school teachers, will be a series of magnificently illustrated articles on the Lands of the Bible—their manners, customs, etc. This series will have over 100 fine engravings, and will alone be worth the price of the *Magazine*. Another new feature will be a series of attractive short stories of the best literary quality, and of distinctly religious character. In order that every school may take advantage of this new departure the price will be considerably less to schools taking two copies and upwards. As this arrangement must not interfere with our regular agency and subscription rates, we have to ask our friends wishing to take advantage of the special rates to schools to write to the Rev. William Briggs, Toronto; Rev. S. F. Huestis, Halifax; or, C. W. Coates, Montreal, for full particulars. See also advertisement at close of this number of the BANNER.

FOR full announcements about our Sunday-school periodicals we refer our readers to the advertisements in this number. This has been the best year these periodicals have ever had. No effort shall be spared to make the numbers for the coming year better still. The Editor feels deep the privilege and responsibility of the opportunity which he enjoys, and asks an interest in the prayers of every Sunday-school worker that his labors may more than ever be made a blessing to the scores of thousands of readers of those periodicals, to all of whom he wishes, with the most heart-felt sincerity, "A Very Happy Christmas and New Year."