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Toronto Dec. 30, 1897.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

With the cordial feelings of the season, we wish our readers a Happy New Year, and many returns of the Day.

At a meeting of the Committee on the Ministers' Widows' and Orphans' Fund, held last week, lengthened consideration was given to the present state of the Fund. It was found to be entirely inadequate to the requirements. The Committee obtained permission from the General Assembly last year, to reduce the annuities paid to the widows and orphans of ministers. This will be necessary, unless the contributions from congregations are very greatly in excess of what they have been in the past. From a careful estimate made by the Committee, it will require an increase of fully fifty per cent. over the contributions received from congregations last year, to pay the annuities at the present rate. In view of the state of the Fund, the Committee agreed to lay the facts before the Church, and to solicit the friendly help and active co-operation of all the ministers and congregations of the Church.

Dr. Torrance, Guelph, requests us to state that on the 1st November he despatched per mail parcels of schedules for collecting statistical information from Congregations and stations, one parcel to each Presbytery Clerk throughout the Church; and on the 24th. December parcels containing sheets for entering the returns sent in. He trusts that Clerks will use all diligence to procure full answers from all pastoral charges, whether vacant or settled, and mission stations, and forward them, in tabulated form, on the sheets provided for the purpose at the date

specified. If any Clerk has not received the parcel sent him he will oblige by reporting the fact at once that another may be forwarded.

The University of Toronto is well represented at the American Psychological Association which met at Cornell on Tuesday Wednesday and Thursday of this week; On the programme we find Dr. August Kirschmann, Director of the Psychological Laboratory with a paper on "Class Experiments." Mr. A. H. Abbott, M.A., assistant in the Psychological Laboratory deals with "Color Saturation" and Professor James Gibson Hume, M.A., Ph.D., is to read a paper upon "The Contribution of Psychology to Ethics and Morality."

There are grumblers in Scotland as well as in Canada who hold that the church is too liberal in Foreign Mission expenditure. To these the Foreign Mission Record of the United Presbyterian Church addresses the following words: In private life we are required to limit our expenditure by our income, but in the work of God one way of educating His Church to give more justly is by forcing on it a larger expenditure. By His blessing expanding the work He requires of His people a larger expenditure. Prayer for the progress of missions means a larger expenditure on them. The shortcoming of income shows chiefly the extent to which giving fails to keep pace with prayer, and the Church lags behind the Divine leading. May she quicken her pace and enlarge her giving! The help of liberal individual offerings may do much to retrieve the situation before the year closes; a marked increase in the offering from every congregation of the Church would still be of greater advantage. There are in the hands of church members who give little or nothing for foreign missions resources which are withheld from service through ignorance, through unbelief, and through a preoccupation with other matters which creates apathy in this. To a corresponding degree the Lord is hindered from doing His mighty works on the earth. Would that every Church member would awake to the vision of responsibility for the giving of the gospel to the heathen, and ask at the feet of Him who died to save the world, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

At a meeting of the Victoria Institute, Dr. Lansdell, the well-known Siberian traveller, submitted statistics on Tithe-giving amongst ancient nations. Beginning with the first-fruits paid in Egypt, as early as 2500 B.C., it was mentioned that the domain of the gods formed one-third of the whole country, in Ptolemaic times one-sixth. Passing to Babylonia, cuneiform testimony was offered to show that Nabonidus, Belshazzar, and Tiglath Pileser paid tithes, as also did others more than 2000 years B.C. The Phœnicians who founded Carthage were next quoted as sending yearly a tithe of their increase to their mother city of Tyre. Dr. Lansdell traced tithe-giving in Europe from 1300 B.C. through Greek and Roman history. The customs of the Pelasgi, Samothracians, Sicilians, Gauls, Britons, and German Saxons, the facts adduced going