

AUGMENTATION FUND, WEST.

BY REV. D. J. MACDONNELL, CONVENER.

Collection, 20th January, 1895.

WE recognize the value of a settled ministry as compared with casual or constantly changing supply. We believe that the Church is one, and that the strong should help the weak. On these simple principles the Augmentation scheme is based.

Ample testimony has been borne to the beneficial effects of this scheme by the Presbyteries which have large and needy districts to oversee. During the past eleven years no fewer than 155 congregations have reached the point of self-support through the aid given from this fund—an average of *fourteen* each year. On the other hand, ordinances have been maintained in some sparsely settled districts, where there is little prospect of growth, and where self-sustaining congregations are an impossibility. The Church cannot allow her children to starve when thus placed in adverse circumstances.

The good done is great. The amount of money required in order to do it is not large—only about \$30,000. The furnishing of help to this extent this year will put hope and courage into the hearts of ministers and people in 150 weak congregations. That these augmented charges deserve help in the overwhelming majority of cases is evident from their high average contribution for ministerial support, viz., \$7.02 per communicant, as compared with the average of \$4.64 in the whole Church for the same object.

Many of the Presbyteries in Ontario and Quebec have been visited by deputies appointed by the Augmentation Committee, and the remainder will be overtaken in due course. The reception given to the deputies has been very hearty. Steps have been taken to secure the reduction of grants in certain cases. Earnest effort has been promised in order to secure the contributions asked from the several Presbyteries. The Synod of Manitoba and the N. W. Territories has also had the matter under consideration, and a stirring appeal concerning both Missions and Augmentation has been issued by the Synod's Committee to the ministers and people of the west.

After all, however, the resolutions passed by Synods or Presbyteries must be carried into effect by the ministers, elders and members of the several congregations, else they will be barren of results. Is it too much to expect that

EVERY CONGREGATION

which has a settled minister will give to this fund in proportion to its ability? Will Mission Stations and Sunday Schools and societies think of the claims of these needy charges? Will the spirited and liberal congregations in each Presbytery take upon themselves some extra burden in this matter to make up for the defi-

ciencies of those which may be illiberal, or indifferent, or prejudiced?

If no better method has been adopted, a special collection should be made on the day appointed by the General Assembly,—20th January, 1895— or as soon thereafter as possible. Envelopes may be obtained, if desired, on application to Rev. R. H. Warden, D.D., Box 1839, P.O., Montreal. Copies of the leaflet issued with the November *Record* may also be obtained from Dr. Warden for distribution.

The Committee earnestly hope that congregations which are now allocating the money raised for the schemes of the Church during the past year will give due weight to the claims of this Fund, and that there will be enough in the treasury to pay grants next April without reduction.

FRENCH EVANGELIZATION.

With the advent of the season when congregations, Christian Endeavor, Young People's Societies, Missionary Societies and Sunday schools meet to distribute their gifts, we humbly ask them to remember French Evangelization, in common with the other great and needy claims of our church's work.

A million and a quarter of our fellow Canadians of French origin know practically nothing of the "good tidings of great joy to the people." It is a sad and appalling fact. They are victims and not abettors. They have been brought up in the Church of Rome and are still more or less under her influence. The faithful hold her teaching as the gospel and reject all else.

Thousands, jaded by the lifeless rites and heartless exactions refuse to recognize the claims of the gospel, and without investigation, declare it to be another form of the same old "religion." Many with a soul hunger which they cannot understand listen to it eagerly and either embrace it openly, taking the consequence, or secretly avow their faith in its teaching and outwardly conform to Romish practices, having so great a fear of their fellowmen.

A few extracts from November reports of colporteurs and missionaries will give an idea of the conditions of their work:—

"I distributed 356 tracts and sold one Bible and three New Testaments and forty-six tracts; I visited 276 Roman Catholic and 28 Protestant families. I could only read passages of Scripture with seven of the Romanists."

"Our work was going well, but the Curé made a terrible attack upon us and threatened to excommunicate all who came to our school. Many of the people are greatly dissatisfied with the manner of the Curé's speech, and they come to visit us so that we have many visitors. I am well received everywhere I visit, and what gives me joy is to see old Roman Catholic men come to our meeting."