

The Presbyterian Review

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Toronto, Dec. 31, 1896.

SOME SPECIAL FEATURES.

As year after year passes, the field opens up and the efforts of the Presbyterian Review are being extended and increased to meet new developments and new needs. During the past year we have found the departments devoted to the Mission Field, to the Sabbath School, to the Christian Endeavour, to work among the young, greatly appreciated and there is reason to believe that the plan we have adopted of setting aside a certain portion of space to special church interests has been found to have been very satisfactory to the reader, specially to the church worker. Acting on the advice of friends we have resolved to add a new department to those already conducted by us, to be devoted to Bible Study. It will be under the caption of The Bible Class, and will appear regularly. It is our desire to improve the Review in every possible way and we are assured that we are steadily moving in the right direction and in accord with the most valued opinion in the church. We have secured the exclusive use for Canada of the Articles which will appear for The Bible Class. They will be very carefully prepared by men of outstanding ability and our desire is that they may be read thoughtfully by the young men and women of the church. If so they will prove helpful and we hope fruitful in good result.

The old departments will be strengthened and improved and will be bright and interesting, and the space now set apart for special articles, selected and contributed, will be used to the best possible advantage. We therefore look forward to the coming year confidently hoping that the co-operation of our constituency so cordially bestowed in the past will be as cordially continued in the future.

NEW YEAR THOUGHTS.

Thoughts with which to begin the New Year :

Begin the year by a complete surrender of self to God.

The reason why so many of our good resolutions at this season of the year fail is that we go forward in our own strength.

The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.

Man proposes ; God disposes.

For it is God that worketh in you to will and to do.

Therefore let our surrender to God be complete, and our self-consecration genuine.

THE AUGMENTATION FUND.

Rev. Dr. Campbell, Renfrew, Convener of the Augmentation Fund has issued a leaflet with interesting facts concerning that Fund, having in view the collection to be made on the Lord's Day January the 17th. The sum asked for is \$23,000, and it has to be stated that the full

amount of that sum is required. It is a careful estimate of the needs of the field. The history of the fund has been a good one, and most important service has been rendered the church by it. It is now thirteen years since it has been established and during these years four hundred and fifty congregations have been assisted, so that, having had help at critical periods, two hundred and sixty one of them are now self-sustaining. Surely no better proof of the need of the fund than such a result, can be desired, or of the wise manner in which it is being administered. No wonder the devoted Convener exclaims "These results are simply marvellous, and our church should be stirred with thankfulness that God has done such great things through us." The list of congregations at present connected with the Fund, and aided by it, numbers one hundred and forty, comprising well nigh forty thousand souls, and the field is the most needy in the church—struggling congregations which without such aid could not have settled ministers with the benefit of complete church organization. The operations of the Committee extend the full length and breadth of Canada and are specially welcomed in the western parts. The congregations thus helped are as a rule when they become self-sustaining, among the most liberal contributors to the general schemes of the church. Rev. Dr. Warden upon investigating the case of the Synod of Montreal and Ottawa on this point found that congregations that had been, or are, assisted by the Augmentation Committee, are contributing \$10,000 annually to Missions, which, as he says, "Speaks volumes on behalf of the Augmentation Fund." Add the other Synods, and the probability is that between \$40,000 and \$50,000 have been contributed to Missions by such fostered congregations during last year,—seven-eighths of which amount, at least, went to help other Funds than Augmentation.

In addition to congregational contributions the Committee is anxious to receive help from Sabbath Schools and Christian Endeavour Societies, as do the other schemes of the church, but which Augmentation has not done thus far. Our readers will be surprised to learn that this fund should have been neglected by the young people. No doubt many claims are being continually pressed on their liberality, but the more the better, the more the need the greater and more glorious the opportunity and privilege. We are informed that the Augmentation Fund has not attracted so many legacies as it ought to have done. No better investment than a willed gift to so important a fund. And those who have been blessed with this world's goods beyond the needs of life and comfort should not delay until the will shall have been read ; Their contributions will be doubly welcome now when the need is so great, and it would be indeed difficult to suppose a more fitting thing than that the rich should help the poor. Let the collection then, on the 17th of January be liberal and large, and made in the true spirit of sacred offering.

INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE.

The first annual meeting of the Council of Seventy that directs the American Institute of Sacred Literature has brought into prominence once more the aim and work of that body. The object in view seems a laudable one and the means adopted have been found to be successful. The Purpose of the Council is (1) to associate more closely those who desire to promote the study of the Bible from the historical stand point, and of other sacred literatures as related to it; (2) to induce properly qualified persons to undertake this work either independently or in connection with another calling; (3) to extend through the American Institute of Sacred Literature a wider acquaintance with the right methods of Bible Study and their results; (4) to direct the affairs of said Institute. The Council does not