

PREFACE.

THE gratifying reception given to the first number of the CONGREGATIONAL YEAR BOOK, and the desirableness of having such an annual *exhibit* of all our Denominational Agencies and Institutions as the Year Book presents, makes it henceforth a denominational necessity. The record of a year's work, and of the men engaged in doing it, seems to us who are living and moving among them, and therefore familiar with all its details, of comparatively trifling importance. But so rapidly do these years revolve, that not many of them can pass before all of us—actors and spectators alike—shall have ceased to have “any more a portion for ever in anything that is done under the sun,” and to them who come after us such records as are here furnished will be exceedingly interesting and valuable.

A Canadian Year Book, moreover, is also much needed as a means of diffusing information in regard to the Denomination at large. Congregationalism in the Dominion is as yet in its infancy. In comparison with some of the other religious bodies, we are “a feeble folk,” and our churches are few and scattered. Such a condition of things is dispiriting, and needs to be counteracted by a better acquaintance, not alone with the principles of the Denomination, but also with the strength and position of the body in Great Britain and the United States. Much information on these points may be found in these pages. At the same time, it is earnestly to be hoped that our love of Congregationalism is something altogether independent of our numbers, be they many or few.

We regret that the hope expressed last year, in regard to the earlier issuing of this year's volume, has not been realized. The change of editor, the impossibility of completing one of the reports through the absence of its Secretary from the country, and other causes, have unavoidably delayed its appearance long after the time intended. All this we hope, however, to obviate another year. We also regret that, owing to causes which need not be particularly specified, it has been impossible to furnish more than one of the historical sketches promised for the present volume by the late editor, that viz., by Dr. Cornish, which will be found to be a very valuable and interesting paper on the last decade of the College, which is much indebted to his services as one of its Professors and its Secretary. The others we hope to furnish next year.

There is, however, a gratifying improvement in the appearance of this volume, chiefly in the uniformity of the typography, the consecutive numbering of its pages, and in the style in which the subscription lists are published. We can only express the hope that friends will excuse the faults and shortcomings, and “read and circulate.”