

PREFACE TO VOLUME XVI.

In an age so busy as ours, when there is so much to read, and so little time to read it, prefaces, like apologies, are generally "voted a bore." Everybody wants to plunge into a subject, *in medias res*, and is impatient of everything merely introductory. Very few words, therefore, will suffice for all we want to say of this nature. Indeed, a volume of such a magazine as the *Canadian Independent* seems scarcely to require a preface. Unlike a new book, whose aim and scope are as yet unknown to the public, it has been read monthly, as issued, as much as it ever will be, and nobody needs to be informed of its origin or object. In such a case, the *preface* becomes practically a *postscript*, to be read, if at all, after it has ceased to be of any service.

The close of another volume, however, calls for devout gratitude to the Giver of all good for the continuance of life and all its varied mercies, not the least of which to us has been the pleasant fellowship these pages have afforded us with friends and brethren, known and unknown, all over the land. Occasionally, some one has cheered us in our work by kindly words of encouragement and approval, which an Editor less modest than ourselves would have published. Others have done the same thing, in a more *practical* way, by sending us lists of *new subscribers*, or contributing to our pages. While—must we confess it!—now and then some brother, with a little more brusqueness, but no less kindly intent, has scolded and criticised us, and told us—what, indeed, we had a suspicion of before—that we were not so wise as we might be! We hope that while they scolded, they also prayed for us.

We have to thank our contributors, both special and occasional, for the valuable assistance they have rendered us, while yet we regret to note the fact that considerably more than one-half of the pastors of our Canadian churches *have never sent us a scratch of the pen during the year!* Of the volume just completed, however, fully two-thirds are original, over 100 of its pages being editorial.

Much of the matter sent us has to be twice revised; first in MS., because of the abbreviations often used, and the failure of correspondents to dot their i's and cross their t's, and condense, and finish, and punctuate, and next, in "proof," of which we have to read and correct about *one hundred yards* for each volume. A little attention to the defects referred to, would greatly lighten this, by far the most irksome part of our work.

Of the future we can only say, that should we be condemned to another term of editorial servitude, our aim shall be, as it has been in the past,—

"To live for those who love us,
For those who know us true;
For the heaven that smiles above us,
And awaits our spirit too;
For the cause that lacks assistance,
For the wrong that needs resistance,
For the future in the distance,
And the good that we can do."