

A LAST WORD.

Before our next issue reaches our readers the financial year of the church will have closed and we therefore make one more appeal to the liberality of the church while it is yet time. The Foreign Mission, Home Mission Augmentation, French Evangelization, Colleges, Aged and Infirm Ministers' Funds, still require large sums to place them in a position to meet their obligations. One great effort made next Sabbath may yet bring up the various funds to the mark. Be liberal; be judicious and thoughtful in appropriating the funds collected.

We remind our readers that only contributions that have been received by Dr. Warden prior to the evening of Friday of next week, can appear in the year's accounts which are to be published in detail. We understand that a considerable number of congregations have not yet forwarded their contributions for one or more of the Schemes of the Church. There is reason to hope that nearly all of the Committees will be able to report to the General Assembly that they are free from debt, provided the non-contributing congregations will forward their contributions prior to the 30th., inst.

The Foreign Mission Fund, is still about \$17,000 in debt. Many congregations have nobly responded to the appeal of the Committee. If all had done so, the amount required would easily have been got. We trust, however, that from quite a number of congregations a contribution will yet be received. We believe that there are many individual members of Churches who will regard it a privilege to help make good the amount still necessary. They can enjoy this privilege by forwarding whatever they may feel inclined to give to the Rev. Dr. R. H. Warden, Presbyterian Offices, Toronto.

As it sometimes happens that congregational or Missionary Treasurers delay to forward money, ministers are respectfully requested to enquire whether the contributions from their congregations have already been sent, so as to prevent disappointment when the published list of the year's receipts appears.

AGED AND INFIRM MINISTERS' FUND.

When the necessary funds of the church are in need we cannot too often bring their claims before our readers, and the following appeal issued by the Committee on the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund deserves the most liberal attention possible:—"It is a matter of regret that it becomes necessary to appeal to you for special consideration of the claims of the above Fund, especially at a time like this, when so strong an appeal has been, and is being made on behalf of several other Funds of the Church. To put further strain on our people in the face of the hard times and the very large measure of liberality on the part of many who have already responded, can only be justified by the consideration of the interest of those annuitants who are largely dependent on the Fund. It is to be feared that the consideration of the claims of at least some of the other Funds has led to a partial overlooking of the necessities and claims of this Fund. Be that as it may, the fact has to be stated that, unless congregations which have not yet contributed do so now, and congregations which have cut down the contribution for the year supplement the same, the annuities will have to be cut down. That cannot be done without inflicting a measure of hardship upon many, if not on all, the ministers on the list. Doubtless, congregations very easily overlook the fact that the necessities of the Fund grow from year to year, owing to the necessary action of the General Assembly at each meeting, placing additional annuitants on the list. For example, the year 1895-6 began with 75 on the list, 11 were added by the Assembly, making a total of 86. Five are removed by death

or otherwise, leaving 81. The Committee has intimation that a number will, in all probability, be added at the next meeting of the Assembly, and in view of that fact, it would be unwise to close the year with any considerable debit balance. Brethren, we appeal to you, ministers and people, to place the necessary funds at the Committee's disposal to continue the annuities, at least as on the modified basis of the past few years. We think it is not going too far to say that no Scheme of the Church presents a stronger claim upon our ministers and people than of a fair allowance to the Aged and Infirm Ministers of the Church.

"May we ask for an early consideration of this matter, and a prompt and generous response, if possible, before the close of the present month."

An Evangelical Prelate gone. The death of Lord Plunkett, Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, removes the strongest and most evangelical figure from the Irish Episcopal bench. He came of a Presbyterian stock and in early life came largely under the influence of Presbyterian teachers. Though wholly loyal to his own church he always maintained the most cordial relations with his Presbyterian brethren. A few years ago he attracted marked attention to himself by assisting in the consecration of a Protestant bishop for Spain. The act was keenly resented by the Romish hierarchy, and almost as bitterly criticised by High Churchmen of his own communion. In the midst of it all he stood firm and never wavered in his Protestant convictions.

Knox Colloge. In many of the Presbyteries of the Church an effort is being put forth to secure a contribution from each graduate of the Colloge towards meeting the existing deficit. It is of very great importance that the money should be forthcoming before the 30th., inst., as the books of Rev. Dr. Warden, the Treasurer, close on the evening of that day.

The Plague in India. The ravages of the plague, or the bubonic fever, in Bombay is appalling. The plague commenced last August, and some idea of the extent of its deadly work can be obtained from the death rate as indicated in the figures below. After the city had been plague stricken for six months, the total number of deaths from the plague was about 1,200 per week; it has been as high as 1,400, or 200 deaths each day. At the end of six months the death rate began to decrease. During that period the total estimated number of deaths from the plague was 16,000. The low caste Hindus who live in crowded and ill-ventilated houses, and who are the most numerous, have been the greatest sufferers. Europeans have been comparatively free from it, though not entirely exempt. Roman Catholic native Christians have suffered much, due largely to their heedlessness of sanitary laws. Of Protestant native Christians only eight died of the plague, five of whom belonged to the Church of England, one to the Methodist and two to the Free Church of Scotland. The Hindus and Mohammedans ascribe the plague to the judgment of God for the prevailing irreligion and sin, and prayers, sacrifices and other propitiatory rites are daily offered in the hope that God, or the gods, will be appeased and stay the scourge.

Looking at Home. The Rev. Dr. Kane, who spoke at the Irish Missions meeting held in Edinburgh last week, made one or two striking remarks. There is, according to him, scarcely any country in Christendom that stands more in need of the Holy Scriptures than Ireland. Ignorance and superstition prevail everywhere. That is, of course, the necessary result of the dominance of Catholicism;