

ous anticipation, and it will leave behind it glad remembrances. It will increase interest and affection for the Sabbath school among the young, and its services will, under the Holy Spirit's guidance, be blessed in its results. The observance of a stated day will help to identify more closely congregation and Sabbath school, leading many who have hitherto been indifferent to the welfare of the Sabbath school to take a more lively interest in its work. Both teachers and scholars will be cheered and encouraged by it. The hope, therefore, is confidently entertained that the observance of this anniversary will soon become general throughout the entire Church. If the services designed for the day are carried out in the spirit, and more or less in the form contemplated by the committee, the institution will win its way from its own inherent merit.

This year the Committee have prepared a very appropriate programme for a Harvest Home service, marked by both unity and variety, so that even in the least efficient hands it is scarcely possible that it can become dull or uninteresting. Bright and appropriate hymns in sufficient number have been selected with readings of Scripture, responsively and in concert, as well as questions and answers have been inserted in appropriate parts of the service, which is divided into four parts, the first, a Call to Praise; the second, Sowing Time; the third, Growing Time, and the fourth, The Harvest Time. The third part is to be followed by an address. Thus, although everything is arranged for decency and in order, scope is given for spontaneity in the service. There are no prescriptions for the address or the prayers. The whole plan, including the hymns, music and readings, is neatly and conveniently printed for distribution, copies of which can be obtained free of charge, in such quantities as may be needed by all making application to the joint Conveners, Rev. T. F. Fotheringham, B.D., 107 Hazen Street, St. John, N.B., or to Rev. James G. Stuart, B.A., 46 Stewart Street, Toronto.

Here it may be mentioned that the General Assembly made admirable provision at its last meeting for the efficient management of Sabbath school work. Mr. Fotheringham, the indefatigable and painstaking Convener, for a number of years felt the work becoming burdensome because of its great increase and placed his resignation in the hands of the Assembly. To the general satisfaction he yielded to the urgent request to continue his services in a lightened form. The Rev. James G. Stuart, who is admirably fitted for the office assigned him, has been made joint-Convener with Mr. Fotheringham. Mr. Stuart has entered on the discharge of his duties with zest and enthusiasm. The labour of the office has been divided, Mr. Fotheringham continuing to take charge of the "Home Study Leaflet," and Statistics, while Mr. Stuart will manage the financial affairs and the Higher Religious Instruction Scheme. Associated with them are the following members of the Assembly's Committee, all of them well known for the interest they take in the work of the Sabbath school: Revs. R. P. Mackay, B.A., D. MacTavish, D.Sc., J. McP. Scott, B. A., Messrs. David Fotheringham, James McNabb, and R. S. Gourlay. In a circular just issued it is stated that

The amount of money required this year will be about \$1,500, and a small amount from each congregation will meet the needs of the Committee. The General Assembly has adopted a resolution recommending a collection on Children's Day as the method of meeting necessary expenses.

### THE HOME MISSION FUND.

WITH characteristic promptitude, Dr. Cochrane, Convener of the Home Mission Committee, is placing before the Church the claims of this most important and essential part of the Church's work. He has just issued to the ministers a circular in which the salient features of the work are presented in compact and condensed shape. Though the circular is primarily intended for ministers, the people generally may be interested in seeing its contents, and it will do them good to read it. It is as follows:—

As the season of the year draws near when congregations and missionary associations make their appropriations to the various mission Schemes of the Church, permit me to remind you of the constant and pressing claims of

#### HOME MISSIONS.

The report presented to the General Assembly last June contains the names of 332 mission fields and 920 preaching stations under the care of the Committee, with an average Sabbath attendance of 32,337 and 12,691 communicants. These stations contributed last year towards the support of ordinances the sum of \$61,645.67, besides, in many cases, building churches and manse, and are giving, not only to the utmost of their ability, but in most cases far beyond many of the members of our wealthiest city congregations.

The North-West Territories continue to appeal for addi-

tional missionaries to overtake the spiritual destitution that necessarily prevails in many of the newly-settled districts. Every year mission stations in the North-West are becoming regularly organized and augmented congregations, and by degrees self-sustaining. But as these are removed from the list, other fields in great numbers are opening up for missionary effort. The emigration to Manitoba and the North-West during the present year is likely to exceed that of the past, and unless the revenue of the Committee is very largely increased, the supply of labourers must fall very far short of the demand.

The summer session in Manitoba College decided upon at last Assembly by such a large majority—with a view to give continuous winter supply to mission stations—will involve an additional expenditure of about \$10,000. The larger indeed the outlay, the better for our cause in the North-West, for the sooner will mission stations become self-sustaining congregations. But unless the funds are sufficient to sustain our missionaries all the year round, the result will be disastrous, not only to Manitoba and the North-West, but to the scheme which has been so enthusiastically adopted.

British Columbia has now four Presbyteries and a Synod, with twenty-one mission fields, fifty-seven preaching stations, three augmented and seven self-sustaining congregations. The progress in this Province has been most gratifying during the past five years, and the Committee hope that, as heretofore, they will be able to render generous aid to our missionaries in that distant field, and encourage the Synod newly formed in giving the Gospel to Presbyterian settlers and others destitute of the means of grace.

In the older Provinces of Quebec and Ontario among the Protestants sparsely scattered in Roman Catholic communities, among the lumbermen of the Ottawa Valley, and in the Algoma and Muskoka region, Home Mission work is being prosecuted with renewed zeal, deserving the sympathy and liberality of the Church at large.

#### AUGMENTATION.

There are at present 147 charges assisted by the Augmentation Fund. The contributions of congregations for years past, as is well known, have on an average been \$4,000 less than the sum required. But for a special bequest during the past year, the indebtedness would be at date \$10,000. Unless, therefore, there is a considerable increase in the contributions to the Fund, the Committee must not only reduce present grants, but hesitate to put new ones on the list. To contemplate a reduction of the small stipends paid our ministers is painful, and can easily be prevented by more liberal contributions to a fund that has proved so helpful in the past. The best evidence of the value of the Augmentation Scheme is that the Presbyteries who see most of its workings, give most liberally for its support.

In October a large amount has to be borrowed to pay the claims of home missionaries and augmented congregations. It is therefore desirable that congregations and missionary societies should forward their contributions at the earliest possible date, and thus reduce to some extent the interest that is paid.

Dr. Cochrane has at the same time issued a circular for the information and guidance of Presbyteries. The Presbyterian circular reads thus:—

The amount required for the current year from the Presbyteries of the Church for Home Missions is \$65,500, and for Augmentation \$31,000. This calculation is based upon the grants made last March, which are considerably in advance of former years, on account of the increasing demand for mission work in the new districts of the North-West and British Columbia.

Unless these amounts are raised, the Committee will be unable to meet the claims against them. The exceptionally large bequests of last year, that enabled the Committee to present such a favourable statement to the General Assembly, cannot be expected again for years to come.

After a careful estimate of the membership and ability of the several Presbyteries, the sum of \$..... has been appointed to the Presbytery of..... for Home Missions, and \$..... for Augmentation.

While very many of our most liberal congregations give of their own accord to all the Schemes of the Church—with out the need of deputations—others require and expect that the members of Presbytery will visit them, and enforce the claims of these funds upon their liberality. May I therefore ask your Presbytery, at its first meeting, to take whatever steps they may see fit to inform the congregations and mission stations within their bounds of what is expected of them for both funds, in order that the amount specified may be raised. The members and adherents of our congregations are well able to do what is asked of them, and are, we believe, in most cases prepared to do so cheerfully, if the facts are only clearly placed before them.

It would be well that Presbyteries in bringing the claims of the Home Mission Fund before congregations, should also emphasize the fact that the supply of Mission Stations all the year round, as is intended by the establishment of a summer session in Manitoba College, will demand next year, \$10,000 additional to the Home Mission Fund. The Committee hope that the congregations of the Church will come up nobly to assist the Committee in carrying out the manifest wish of the General Assembly in this matter.

The Church has the fullest guarantee that the affairs of the Home Mission Committee are managed with the utmost prudence and economy. The Executive do not ask for more than they can make a good use of, and were a larger liberality exercised by the Church, the work of Home Missions could be greatly and beneficially extended. The greater activity now displayed in seeking to make provision for the spiritual wants of the people of the North-West is very praiseworthy, but many who know how, in the earlier days of settlement in Ontario, there was much neglect, cannot altogether rid their minds of a mournful regret, that the Church of those days was not more energetic in Home Mission work. Surely the Committee can confidently rely on a liberal response to the appeal that is now being issued.

## Books and Magazines.

THE MOTHER'S NURSERY GUIDE, BABYHOOD.—The sphere occupied by this excellent monthly is wide as it is interesting. That the publication named is doing good work and is highly appreciated is evidenced by the enlargement and improvement that has recently taken place. Its contents are varied and practical, covering all that is interesting and useful in its chosen departments. Its value to all immediately concerned in the care of infancy is apparent.

COLUMBIA: A Story of the Discovery of America. By John R. Musick. Illustrated.

LIBRIAN. A Story of the Spanish Conquests. By John R. Musick. Illustrated. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co.; Toronto: 11 Richmond Street West.) It may seem an impossible task to write the history of the United States, making it valuable as a history and at the same time interesting as a romance; but the plan adopted by the author in this series is both practical and novel. From Columbus down to the present day, if divided into the ordinary period of human life, make twelve lifetimes or ages; and by studying each of these lifetimes or ages, one may discover that the spirit of the age or time changes in about forty years. The author having deduced these facts by careful study of history, gives to each period a separate existence in the form of a complete story, and yet cleverly links them all together to make the whole series a correct and united history, and at the same time a fascinating romance. The historical divisions are: 1st Age of Discovery; 2nd Conquest; 3rd Bigotry; 4th Colonization; 5th Reason; 6th Tyranny; 7th Superstition; 8th Contention of Powers for Supremacy; 9th Independence; 10th Liberty Established; 11th Supremacy Abroad; 12th Union. Titles to the forthcoming volumes are: Vol. III. St. Augustine: A Story of the Huguenots. Vol. IV. Pocahontas: A Story of Virginia. Vol. V. The Pilgrims: A Story of Massachusetts. Vol. VI. A Century too Soon: A story of Bacon's Rebellion. Vol. VII. The Witch of Salem; or, Credulity Run Mad. Vol. VIII. Braddock: A Story of the French and Indian Wars. Vol. IX. Independence: A Story of the American Revolution. Vol. X. Sustained Honour: A Story of the War of 1812. Vol. XI. Humiliated Pride: A Story of the Mexican War. Vol. XII. Union: A Story of the Great Rebellion, and of Events Down to the Present Day. In all previous narratives of the great events of the discovery and conquest of the New World, we see the leading actors only in their historical connection, but, in the works under notice, side lights are thrown upon their private lives, on their loves and hates, their motives and ambitions, their successes and misfortunes, their friends and their foes. They are no longer figures which strut across the stage of history, and then disappear, but they are living beings; we become acquainted with them, whose fortunes we follow with vivid interest. In lieu of a bare record of disconnected events, which the average reader finds so difficult to arrange systematically in his memory, we here have the story of individual lives; and we can follow these lives along lines on which the events arrange themselves in orderly sequence. It is not too much to say that a day devoted to each of these volumes by the average reader will afford a more comprehensive and permanent grasp of the history of the times to which they relate than is ordinarily acquired by years of study of the dry histories of the schools. The books are timely, valuable and important. They are handsomely bound.

THE VOICE FROM SNAKE. The Eternal Basis of the Moral Law. By F. W. Farrar, D.D., F.R.S. (New York: Thomas Whittaker; Toronto: William Briggs.)—The distinguished Archdeacon of Westminster cannot be accused of slothfulness in the discharge of his sacred duties. From his prolific pen there comes a succession of valuable works which deservedly find a large number of delighted readers. It is but a short time since we had occasion to notice with admiration his splendid volume "Darkness and Dawn." Now a no less valuable work, whose title heads this notice, has been issued. Archdeacon Farrar can get the ear of many that others cannot so effectively reach. Men prominent in the literary and scientific world have been telling us of late that the eternal law of the only wise God has well-nigh lost its religious sanctions, and that some new basis for moral law is a necessity of our time. It is refreshing to find that a man of Dr. Farrar's scholarly attainments, broad sympathies and literary accomplishments does not hesitate in the most uncompromising manner to maintain that the Ten Commandments form "the eternal basis of the moral law." The author of this volume does not need to apologize for its publication. The explanation he gives is based on circumstances peculiarly gratifying, not to himself merely, but to all who feel an interest in the progress of religious truth, indicating as they do that there is an earnest spirit of religious enquiry in quarters least expected. In his preface he says: "I am encouraged to yield to the request for their publication for two reasons: first, because they were listened to week after week by crowded congregations; secondly, because I learnt, from trustworthy sources, that they have been found profitable by many of those who heard them. The number of young men who were content to stand for hours in the transepts of the Abbey in order to hear them was unusually large, and my sense of responsibility in delivering them was greatly increased by the fact that they had awakened the interest of so important a section of the community. The letters which reached me from youths and young men, who were entire strangers to me, showed that some hearts had been touched by them and some consciences awakened." He goes on to state that the editor of a periodical in which some of them had appeared, on discontinuing publication at the author's request, had "many letters, especially from working-men, in which the writers urged him to continue furnishing these sermons to his readers." The work contains an introduction, in which much valuable information is conveyed in reasonable compass. Then follow discourses on "The Ten Words," "The Law our Tutor," "The Manner of Keeping the Commandments," successive discourses on each of the Commandments, "Thou Shalt Not," and a Note on the Second Commandment. It is scarcely necessary to remark that there is a freshness and adaptation to the needs and conditions of the present time in these discourses. The Fourth Commandment is dealt with in a manner singularly satisfactory by one whose leanings are at least in the direction of Broad Churchism. He appreciates the value and purpose of the sacred day of worship and rest too highly to countenance lax notions in regard to its observance.