

# The Presbyterian College Journal.

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MONTREAL, P.Q., DECEMBER 18th, 1883.

Yes! the year is growing old,  
And his eye is pale and blear'd;  
Death, with frosty hand and cold,  
Plucks the old man by the beard,  
Sorely,—Sorely!

*I enquire.*

SITTING here by the window, watching the laughing crystal flakes that whirl and dance outside, almost irresistibly we see the vision of America's beloved songster start up upon our page. Winter vacation is at hand. A few hours at most and the dormitories will be closed, and the class rooms deserted, and the corridors hushed in silence. Heaving a sigh of relief, the toil-worn student emerges from a stiff academic atmosphere, buys a railway ticket, and speeds away home. Then, as the train dashes along through fields of snow, thought runs apace, and in retrospective reverie he recalls the eventful scenes through which he has but lately passed. If amid all these prolific reminiscences, or amid all the bustling festivities of the season, the eye of some faithful reader is lured to this particular part of the JOURNAL, may it find here the hearty wish of editors and managers,

## A Merry Christmas to You.

### THE MISSIONARY PROBLEM.

A CANADIAN interseminary missionary association has been successfully organized in Toronto, and we understand that steps will be taken to induce the various theological colleges in Montreal to co-operate. There would seem to be little if any difficulty in bringing about such a result, especially when it is remembered that during the past term the attention of those studying for the ministry has been directed with unusual emphasis to the claims of the foreign field. These claims are equally pressing on every body of the universal church, and after all form the only practicable basis on which may be consummated that Christian unity, so devoutly to be wished for. Indeed, the spirit of brotherhood, that already pervades the evangelical denominations, is simply one of the reflex benefits of missions. When we go abroad and

travel in strange lands, we instinctively feel friendly to one of our own townsmen whom we chance to meet, and thus even persons who live next door in Montreal may become acquainted, perhaps for the first time, whilst roaming the streets of London or Paris. In the same way the missionaries of the various denominations are drawn to one another by their common Christianity in the midst of heathenism, and have greater cause and desire for union than exist at home. It is manifestly fitting that the future ministers and missionaries of the church should, during the time they are preparing for their life work, band themselves together for the purpose of discussing and furthering the great cause in which people are to-day more interested than ever. It is to be hoped that the organization of such a society may be instrumental in leading not a few of us to an honest consideration of the whole subject of missions, and that, as a direct outcome, a great army of able and willing missionaries may soon issue from our schools of the prophets. Just now, there is a mighty cry for volunteers. Dr. Pierson, who has for a long time calmly and thoroughly been making calculations, believes it possible to evangelize the world within the next twenty years; but in order to do this, there must be ten thousand more missionaries than at present, and at least fifty millions of dollars must be put annually into the Lord's treasury. This is by no means an exorbitant demand, considering the vast resources that are used for improper purposes even by nominal Christians. Statistics might be startling in this connection, for only one half of all the churches in Christendom contribute anything for foreign missions. The average amount given by each communicant is fifty cents per annum, and in some wealthy localities it is even as low as twenty-five cents. Think of it! Twenty-five or fifty cents a year for the conversion of a thousand millions of heathens! If the world is ever to be won for Christ, there must be a wide-spread awakening of Christians to a sense of duty and privilege in the matter of liberal giving. As for the missionaries themselves, we have no doubt but that they will be forthcoming. There are and always have been a large number of young men willing, nay anxious, to lay themselves on the altar, but owing to a lack of funds in the treasury, their intention is too often defeated. There are more than one in this very institution who, to our certain knowledge, have the foreign field in view, and are even incurring considerable expense in fitting themselves for that work; it remains to be seen whether in due time the church will be in a position to accept their services. The fact is that any one, who gives the subject an honest consideration, must acknowledge the priority of the missionary claims, and, acknowledging it, there should never be a dearth of laborers. Well were it if all men could be brought to realize the surpassing grandeur of the office of that man who carries the light to them that sit in darkness and in the region and shadow of death. What though hardships