

## PREFACE.

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At the commencement of the volume of which the present is the last number, an Editor *pro tem.* was appointed, in order to allow the brother who had laboured in this service for seven long years, a much-needed time of rest. But three months' deputyship were extended to six, and now six have been prolonged to the full tale of twelve, so that the Preface to the whole volume must be written by the same hand.

The year for which the magazine has been thus once more in our charge, has been a very important one in the history of Congregationalism in Canada, in consequence of the agitation of our Missionary arrangements. The position of Editor has involved much of responsibility and anxiety, but we have been greatly cheered by the expressions of warm approval that have come to us from many quarters, showing that an acceptable service has been here rendered to the common cause.

It is a circumstance calling for special notice and acknowledgment, that "the pen of a ready writer" has been found in the hand of so many of our brethren throughout the year, that the great body of the contents of almost every number has been expressly written for the pages of the *INDEPENDENT*. We have been embarrassed by our very riches! "Give us room," has been our cry, month by month. Some things have of course been published, with which we strongly disagreed, but we have seldom interposed between a correspondent and our readers, judging that liberty was the friend of light. Our experience, however, impresses us with the conviction, that unlimited liberty is dangerous to light and love.

Of the future, the future must speak: we are looking backward only, in closing the twelfth volume. Thanking our friends for their co-operation, and for their acceptance of services which have fallen immeasurably below our own standard, we bid them a hearty—*FAREWELL!*

F. H. M.

Toronto, May 23rd, 1866.