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Thursday, January 18th, 1900.

One of the idle questions we may hear about this time is—"What tangible results can be shown from the week of prayer?" Men still ask for a sign and receive the same answer.

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The Century Fund Children's Banks are being distributed. To make them of real value parents should give each child an allowance weekly, and insist that anything deposited in the "Bank" should be from that allowance. Only in this way will the child be able to give anything. We earnestly hope our church will not tacitly countenance the practice of begging for money to put in their Banks.

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The announcement in the Dominion Presbyterian of last week, of the amounts received up-to-date for the schemes of the Church, and also of the amount still required, need not greatly alarm us, though the disparity is very great. The great bulk of contributions to the schemes comes in after the annual meetings of congregations. It would be an eye-opener for many in the Church if Dr. Warden were to publish the amount he has been obliged to pay the Banks for advances, while this money has been in the hands of Congregational Treasurers.

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The game of chess being played with South Africa for a board, is tantalizingly slow and silent. A critical stage has been reached, and every feint and move is watched with intensest interest. Incensed at the deliberateness of the principals, and maddened by the clamor for news of the game, some have invented

stories and circulated them freely. One of these touched the reputation of a brave man and a good soldier, and left a stain upon it. If this was done intentionally there could not be a more diabolical trick. If it was done wantonly, it is scarcely less blameworthy. Every man should seek to hold up the hands of those who must fight while we look on.

Mental Decadence.

We are passing through a period when the majority of men do not think. Time is too valuable to permit of the examination of a subject, or even of a topic, in all its bearings, and if one happens to unearth a problem in its crude form, as a rule it is covered over again, and the discoverer hurries on to his business engagements. Yet we want to reach conclusions in regard to these subjects. Some one must do the preliminary thinking, and when it comes to the last analysis, we like to have it brought to us, with an easily understood record of the process by which this final stage has been reached, then we will complete the process, affix our signature, and announce the conclusion to which we have been led.

Every member of the Presbyterian Church in Canada would like to have definite convictions with respect to the Twentieth Century Fund, but not one in one thousand would take the time to think his way through the problem till he reached such definite conviction. The Assembly's Committee, with a shrewd appreciation of the situation, prepared a "Century Fund Catechism" in which the whole situation—from the standpoint of the promoters, of course—is tersely and clearly set forth. There was an amazing demand for that Catechism. It was read and adopted over the whole Dominion, and hence the wonderful unanimity of opinion in respect to the Century Fund. The man who got up that Catechism should have a term in the Moderator's Chair.

Mr. S. B. Capon, the new President of the Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, has hit upon the same idea. He also would have a Catechism prepared, to be used in the homes all over America as the Shorter Catechism was in Scotland; and it should, in simple words, tell the purpose, and the plan, and the extent of the great Foreign Mission movement to every American child.

The effect of this semi-ready thinking is certainly to inform the mind, but it will also dwarf the mind. Even now men cannot think continuously and connectedly. As in the morning the dawn springs from height to height, but leaves the intervening valleys in darkness, so our thinking has come to touch nothing more than the apex of things. We have no time to go down and search out all that lies between this point and that one upon which the light now rests. We think

rapidly, and act at once, it is said, but we are acting in absolute ignorance of much that lies behind us. And we have lost the rugged strength of those who saw the forward peaks as clearly as we now do, but who traversed every foot of the intervening way, and know what lies between.

A Silver Crutch.

On this side of the line we have not suffered to an appreciable extent, from the coddling of our theological students. Most of these now filling Canadian pulpits supported themselves while passing through college, and funds that might almost be had for the asking, were left untouched. It is a record of which our Church may well be proud.

Over the line the easily obtained aid for the impecunious student has been a curse in the guise of a blessing. It has robbed young men of a part of their manhood, and has sent them into the active ministry with weakened moral fibre. A re-action is setting in, and now Yale has shown the way, under President Hadley's leadership, for a better disposition of the funds generously placed at the disposal of the authorities for assisting young men struggling for an education. All scholarships are henceforth to be given as a reward of merit according to the class lists, or as the reward of practical work done in the line of the student's chosen profession. Thus the theological student who will enter upon work to better the condition of the poor, either in mission work, in charitable work, or in educational work, will receive a certain payment for the work thus done. Comment upon the wisdom of the reform is unnecessary. True it is liable to abuse, and will doubtless be abused, but the evil done will, we feel confident, be far more than balanced by the good.

A New Magazine.

The initial number of The Bible Student, containing the Bible Student and Religious Outlook, with Rev. W. H. McPheeters, D. D., as Editor-in-Chief, promises well. The field to be covered has been somewhat limited, as the change of name would indicate. There still remain matters of interpretation, of introduction and criticism, and the great questions that emerge from the discussion of the latter. The names of the Associate Editors, Dr. Benj. Warfield, Dr. S. Smith, Dr. Geo. T. Purvis, Dr. Daniel J. Brown and Dr. John D. Davis, are a guarantee of sound scholarships, and an outlook upon the religious questions of the day from the safe standpoint of Liberal Conservatism.

It is interesting to read the prospectus and compare promise with accomplishment in this initial number. We find considerable attention given to the line of