

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Belleville Bible Woman's and Domestic Mission.

THERE is probably no period more anxiously anticipated by the careful husbandman, than the first harvest; and if it is new ground that has been taken in, new soil cultivated for the first time, and if perchance age and experience have shaken wise heads and looked grave upon the undertaking, the Farmer is doubly anxious to prove that his boldness was not rashness, or his enterprise without solid foundation. How carefully he repeats his calculation, Will the outlay be repaid? Will the result be an equivalent for the labour? Will the success overbalance his anxiety and cares? Will the in-gathered harvest prove he has judged well and wisely, or lay him open to the imputation of having undertaken a task too heavy, and wearied himself in a fruitless effort?

It is with a kindred feeling and some such questionings, that the Committee of this Association look forward to the close of their first year; and it lies with those who will carefully peruse the following pages, to give the verdict whether or not the work has been according to the mind of the Lord, and whether or not His presence has gone up with it as surely through the cloud, as in the bright shining of the light. Before judging of a result, we must be sure of the aim in view; before estimating success, we must know the wants to be supplied, and the difficulties to be overcome.

The question of the object to be attained is a most important one, lying as it does at the very root of the matter. The answer is a very simple one: "To bring the Gospel to every creature." It is frequently objected, that it is the duty of Clergymen to preach and teach. Undoubtedly it is their high privilege to be called to carry on the Ministry begun by Jesus of Nazareth; but it is not solely and only THEIR work to lead sinners to a Saviour; the first act of a believing disciple when Christ was on earth, was to bring a brother or a friend to the temple found Messiah, saying "come and see." It was not only in the temple that Christ taught the people, or only in the synagogue, that he stood up to read; it was out of the little ship, thrust back from the land, that he spake such words "as never man spake." It was from the mountain-side his wondrous sermon was delivered; it was by the way-