

The Presbyterian Review.

Vol. XIII.—No. 49.

TORONTO, JUNE 10, 1897.

\$1.50 per Annum

The Presbyterian Review.

Issued EVERY THURSDAY, from the office of the Publishers, Rooms No. 23, 21, 25, Aberdeen Block, South-East corner Adelaide and Victoria Streets, Toronto.

TERMS, \$1.50 per annum.

All communications for either Business or Editorial Departments should be addressed PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW, Drawer 2661 Toronto, Ont.

Publishers and Proprietors:

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Incorporated under the Great Seal of Dominion of Canada

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ADVERTISING RATES.—Under 3 months, 15 cents per line per insertion; 3 months, \$1.00 per line; 6 months, \$1.75 per line; 1 year \$3.00. No advertisement charged at less than five lines. None others than unobjectionable advertisements taken.

Toronto, June 10, 1897.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

BY the time this issue reaches our readers the General Assembly will have opened at Winnipeg, and for two weeks the eyes of the faithful will be turned Westward. As the highest court of our Church—dealing with a great variety of subjects touching the activities of the Church, it is natural that the Assembly should attract attention from all parts of the country. The meeting has an especial interest to Winnipeg for the retiring Moderator, whose sermon we are able to give to day in our columns, was at one time Winnipeg's most popular preacher. His personality as Moderator has been felt during his term and no doubt his presence as the immediate past Moderator will be of great assistance to his successor whoever he may be. Professor Gordon's sermon was a worthy discourse—worthy of the man and of the occasion. The aim of Dr. Gordon is to place an elevated conception of the Mission of the Church before the brethren and his thoughtful, free, yet cautiously expressed ideas will help to draw the mind upwards. His closing passage deserves to be emphasized. In it is the gist of many truths: "the only fitness for witness bearing is the personal knowledge of Christ, so that ours may be no second hand evidence but that of those who testify what they have seen. The need of the Church and of the world is for men who see Jesus, men to whom the Holy Spirit testifies of Christ, glorifies Christ, shews the things of Christ, so that Christ is for them the supreme reality of life, their light of all their seeing and the strength of all their service. We all know what it is to have dim and distant views of Him, learning about Him from others rather than seeing Him for ourselves. May He keep giving us the nearer, clearer, fuller vision of Himself that shall make us more efficient witnesses and more zealous

workers, and that shall be to us the inspiring pledge of that perfect vision to be enjoyed by His followers when "they shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads, and they shall reign for ever and ever."

As far as has been discerned the Assembly will be a peaceful one. No buring questions are in sight and consequently the real life and work of the Church will receive all the greater attention. Of course there are difficult questions to settle, but they appear in the category of routine rather than as special cases. The Foreign Mission estimates, the deficit in the Aged and Infirm Minister's Fund, and French Evangelization will require careful and generous consideration. The resources of the Church are many and although it has been thought by not a few leading brethren that the financial strain of the past year has been rather heavy, yet the contributing power of the membership has not been nearly reached and it is continually growing.

The reports on Church Life and Work and on Young People's Societies show that the year has been fruitful in excellent congregational work and a hopeful view of the future is warranted.

The election of the Moderator is not likely to cause any but the most kindly feeling and the new executive chief of the Church will receive the loyal support of the brethren.

The hospitalities of Winnipeg will lighten the labors of the Session and no doubt the western trip will open the eyes of many fathers and brethren for the first time, to the wide and necessitous field, with its great possibilities, that lies open for our entrance in the great West.

HOME MISSIONS.

In Winnipeg it is but natural, that the cause of Home Missions should receive a first place in the deliberations of the General Assembly. It is practically the headquarters of one of the most important and interesting departments of home effort within the church. There Rev. Dr. Robertson resides, as also Professor A. B. Baird and Rev. C. W. Gordon, men of mark in the Home field. Dr. Robertson will convey to the Assembly his experience of British liberality and interest as manifested in the splendid reception given him during his recent extensive tour of Great Britain and Ireland. That interest speaks volumes. It is not merely the interest of a common humanity, or the love of a common Christianity, it is the interest and love of kinship extended to fellow workers in the one vineyard. "Our kinsmen across the sea" are the words usually made use of in the Presbyteries and Synods of England, Ireland and Scotland, when Dr. Robertson, or other ambassadors from Canada appeal for support. The imperial bond, of silken cords, is lovingly felt by the churches "at home" and no better proof of that one-ness of empire which exists politically, could be desired than the brotherly interest shown by the British Churches in the religious welfare of the colonies. No subsidy for national defence, no naval or military station on our shores, no symbol of royal authority, speaks so eloquently of the sovereign sway as does the free-will offering of the people sent to our help by the hand of the energetic Western Superintendent of Mis-