

Pan-Presbyterian.

“REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST GENERAL PRESBY- TERIAN COUNCIL.”

THIS is an adequate and very valuable record of the proceedings of a great Assembly, which must necessarily become historic. Though so much has been written upon the First Presbyterian Council, we trust that a brief word, suggested by the appearance of the volume above named, will not be counted out of place. This beautifully-printed octavo, of 382 pages, contains *in extenso* all the papers read in the Council, and substantially the addresses as reported in the *Edinburgh Daily Review*. In the appendix there is a most interesting and valuable report of the condition of the Presbyterian Churches throughout the world. Nowhere else, so far as we know, is this information to be found in a single volume; and whilst we Presbyterians do not forget to love the Church of God in all its sections, and to rejoice in its essential unity, it is hoped we shall not deem it an unchristian thing, or a thing in any way unworthy of us, to cherish a special interest in those churches which have the same organization as ourselves, and are in full accord with us as to the contents of the Christian Doctrine.

The idea of such a Council as that which met in Edinburgh last July, is not a new thing in the Reformed Church. Calvin, it is well known, expressed his willingness to “pass over ten seas” in order to promote the communion of the several churches of the Reformation. Beza, his eminent successor at Geneva, urged the necessity of such a Council. During the three centuries since the Reformation, many a prayer has ascended for the union and fellowship of the churches virtually resting on the same foundations—many an earnest word has been spoken with this end in view. But serious obstacles stood in the way, and seemed to make the accomplishment of

such an end little else than the dream of a visionary.

During the last ten years the desire for a General Council of all Presbyterian Churches found expression in many quarters, on both sides of the Atlantic; but it were unjust not to connect the names of Dr. McCosh, in America, and Dr. Blaikie, in Scotland, very especially with the advocacy of such an Assembly. The story of the discussions—negotiations, travel, organization, by which the great meeting in the capital of Scotland was preceded—need not here be told. Labours manifold, of which a pretty full account is found in the preface to this report, were undertaken and accomplished by men admirably fitted for the work, and full of zeal for its success.

It may safely be said that few Synods or Councils more interesting in their personnel have been convened since the Synod of Dort and the Westminster Assembly. A large number of the most eminent theologians and most eminent preachers of the Continent of Europe, of Britain, and of America were present. There were to be seen men whose works on Systematic Theology, Scripture Interpretation, Church History and Apologetics are found in all our libraries:—Drs. Schaff, A. A. Hodge, McCosh and Patton; Drs. Flint, Cairns, Gould, David Brown, Lorimer and Killen; Presensé and Godet. Men whose reputation as public orators is wide as the Presbyterian Church—in some instances wide as the world—were there:—Hall of New York, Van Dyke of Brooklyn, Hoge of Richmond, McGregor of Edinburgh, Dykes and Frost of London, and Monod of Paris. There were men who had rendered arduous service on the Mission Field; such as Dr. Murray Mitchell, so honourably connected with India, and Dr. Thomson, the author of “The Land and the Book,” who still shows great vigour, after more than thirty years labour in Syria. Dr. Duff, too much worn with disease and suffering to be present, addressed the Council in a letter, characterized by all the burning zeal and pathos which distinguished that illustrious Missionary, and which may now be regarded as his parting words to the church he loved so well. But we cannot continue to enumerate, without doing injustice to