

THE PRESBYTERIAN ANNIVERSARIES.

All the great Presbyterian Assemblies for 1868 have now been held. Their deliberations and decisions have been of more than usual interest and importance. We can give but the briefest outline of the proceedings of the supreme courts of our sister Churches on both sides of the Atlantic; a full account would fill a very large volume.

There are some features common to all Presbyterian Assemblies. Their discussions are free and open. There is no ecclesiastical caste keeping the power to rule exclusively in their own hands. There is no vain jangling about the length of a coat, the colour of a necktie, or the shape of a hat. There is an earnest endeavour to promote the work of Missions to the heathen at home and abroad. Vital religion is not frowned down upon as a troublesome impertinence, but is regarded as the preserving salt of the Churches, without which their existence can be of little or no use. The spirit of union pervades every branch of the great Presbyterian family, from the Old School Presbyterian Church down to the minutest fragment of so called "Reformed Presbyterians." The feeling extends from Australia to England, Scotland, Ireland, Canada and the United States. It would appear that the Head of the Church is bringing His people together, mustering his forces, in preparation for the stern conflict with gigantic forms of evil that overshadow the world.

The American Assemblies.

In point of time the great Assemblies of the Presbyterian Churches in the United States come first. The Home Missionary operations of these, especially of the Old School Church, are immense, and they require to be so, when the vast extent of the country is taken into consideration. The smaller branches are also at work with praiseworthy energy. The Foreign Missions of the Old School Church alone are much more extensive than the Foreign Missions of all the Scottish Churches together.

The Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church of the United States, which is much inferior in wealth and numbers to the Old and New School, raises ninety thousand Dollars a year for Foreign Missions.

Union has been the all-absorbing theme in all the American Assemblies. Very large majorities in the Old and New School have voted in favour of union on the basis of the Westminster Confession taken in the "Calvinistic sense." Dr. HODGE and a few other venerable men in the Old Assembly opposed the movement and dissented. Dr. Hodge pointed to the latitude allowed in the New School, and dreaded that the union would necessitate similar liberty in the united Church. But, said he, if the Assembly, *if the Church resolve to unite, we the minority, must as loyal sons of the Church submit.* This sentiment is worthy of the venerable Doctor, and we hope that its echo will reach Edinburgh and Glasgow.

The Basis is to be sent down to Presbyteries, and if two thirds of the Presbyteries approve of it, the union will be consummated in 1869, or at latest in 1870. The venerable Dr. Prime, writing of the Old School Assembly, says:—

Thus closed a remarkable meeting for the greatness and gravity of the questions discussed, the entire harmony of feeling in the discord of opinion, the importance of the resolutions reached, and the spirit of love and good will that prevailed. It was emphatically a union Assembly. It adopted a basis, by an overwhelming majority, of union with the New School Assembly; it invited back the Southern Assembly; it tendered the olive branch to the Seceders, under the "Declaration and Testimony," and appointed a committee to confer with the other Presbyterian bodies, to prepare the way for union with them all! God grant that the good work, thus favoured, may go on to a blessed consummation.

The Southern Assembly met at Baltimore. There were evidences enough of the fearful consequences of the war in accounts of the Churches burned, mansees robbed, ministers and people impoverished. Time will gradually heal, as it is healing, these wounds, and then no doubt the Southern Assembly will see its way clear to cast in its lot with the Northern brotherhood.

We are happy to note the prosperity of the United Presbyterian Church of the United States. It was this Church that handed over to us the Trinidad Mission, and that has in Egypt and India such prosperous Missions. A union is likely to be consummated between this Church and a large section of "Reformed Presbyterians."

Synod of the United Presbyterian Church, Scotland.

This Synod met at Edinburgh on the 11th May. Dr. Frew was elected Moderator. The statistics show 597 congregations on the roll, with 176,391 members. The