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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11, 1884.

THE election of Prof. McLaren to the Moderator's chair is another tribute to Presbyterian solidity. The Moderator is emphatically a solid man. How many clerical high flyers have gone up like a rocket and come down like a stone since Dr. McLaren began his work in Amherstburgh thirty-one years ago! There is a lesson here for young ministers. Permanent honours in the Presbyterian Church are not won by sensational methods of working, nor even by circulating a little heresy for advertising purposes. High character, good sense, and steady, persevering work are the qualities that tell in the end.

THE report of one of the city dailies says the Moderator appointed Principal Caven, "Principal Conant," and Mr. W. B. McMurrich, a committee to arrange for the supply of the St. James' Square pulpit last Sabbath. "Professor Conant" is the hero of a novel by the Hon. Mr. Huntingdon, published the other day. Now who has been so deep in that novel already that he put the name in there? Was it the reporter or the Moderator? We very much doubt if the Moderator reads novels so soon after publication and gets so immersed in them that he puts the hero of one of them on a committee. It must have been the reporter that was thinking of Prof. Conant.

PRINCIPAL MCKNIGHT'S turn for the Moderator's chair will soon come, and unless we are much mistaken it will come next year. Two years ago, in a thin house in St. John, composed largely of eastern men, he handsomely withdrew his name and nominated Dr. Cochrane on the ground that he had been nominated by a majority of Presbyteries. That fact got him many votes last week and would have put him in the chair against almost any other man than Dr. McLaren. It is time that all talk about the east and west had stopped, and still we cannot help saying that the west has had three Moderators in succession. That should do for a few years. If there must be an east and a west let us divide the honours fairly. Better, however, to have no such distinctions and elect the best man.

AUGMENTATION is a great success. Out of 223 congregations below the minimum, seventy-eight raised the amount themselves, and some of them even sent in a contribution. The people were asked for \$29,000, and they gave \$34,000. The aided churches were asked for \$6,000, and they gave \$8,500. The people are sound at the core. If a good scheme is fairly set before them they always respond. One cannot help asking, might not this have been done some years ago? Business was not good last year, but still the money came. It would have come just as easily four years ago. To Mr. Macdonnell is mainly due the credit of working this scheme so well in the West. He was well assisted by others. The Presbyteries co-operated heartily, and the result is a surplus. Now the next thing is to arrange the schemes for the future so that this movement will not be a mere spurt. Now readers of THE PRESBYTERIAN, are you poorer for giving augmentation such a lift?

THE American Presbyterian Assembly has again refused to reduce its numbers. The financial point was the one principally considered in the end. A General Assembly there costs about \$40,000 mainly for travelling expenses and accommodation. By reducing the Assembly to half its size \$20,000 might be saved, but it was contended with great force that saving this amount would involve a loss of \$100,000 to the various schemes of the Church. There are six

hundred members in the Assembly as at present constituted. These go home from every meeting with renewed enthusiasm for the progress of the Church, with increased knowledge of her work, and with renewed resolutions to work better themselves. The enthusiasm is contagious, and effects the churches in the localities to which the six hundred go. Half the number would produce only half the enthusiasm, and there would be a falling off in the contributions. There is great force in this argument. We would greatly prefer to see all the ministers of our Church at every Assembly if the Church could afford it. It is objected that such a large body would be "unweildy." No one has a right to *wield* it. One great advantage would be that no designing man *could wield* it. Each Assembly would then represent the Church in a sense that one-fourth the members can never do. The whole body of the ministers would then go back to their work with fresh zeal and enthusiasm. That is to say they would if the proceedings of the Assembly were conducted in such a manner as to produce these qualities. Our Church business could not afford a supreme court composed of all or even half the ministers.

OUR ECCLESIASTICAL PARLIAMENT.

EVEN the most permanent institutions are subject to the law of change. The General Assembly is no exception. In many respects it differs from the first General Assembly of the Canada Presbyterian Church. The changes have been gradual, almost imperceptible; but members of the first Assembly that met in Toronto in 1870 can note several differences in that of 1884. Many prominent men who took part in the first are with us still. Few of them have lost their vigour. Their natural force is unabated, their wisdom has matured. They continue to wield worthily and well the influence that study, experience and fidelity to truth and righteousness generally bring with them. But other familiar voices are heard no more. The great and the good men of other days are no longer with us. Dr. Topp, with his matchless good sense, practical business talent and gentlemanly bearing is no longer here. Dr. Jennings, with his direct and manly, but brief contributions to important debates, and his kind and genial way with everybody, has bidden us farewell. The venerable Mr. McKenzie, of Zorra, has finished his course. Dr. Kemp, a man of vast acquirement, an authority on constitutional questions, and a rare master of dialectic skill, only a few weeks since passed away. The learned and courteous Dr. Willis, deeply versed in systematic theology, has closed his useful career. Dr. Burns, whose name is inseparably associated with the Presbyterian Church in Canada, whose herculean labours helped to make it what it is, has exchanged the service of the Church militant for that of the Church triumphant. These all died in faith. They rest from their labours and other men have entered into their labours. The fervid zeal and prophetic earnestness of John Ross and Mr. McTavish are transferred to other spheres; the former having withdrawn to the wilderness, faithful to his convictions and devoted as ever to the cause of the Master, the latter to the Free Church of his native land.

The union of 1875 has brought other men to the front whose talents, zeal, energies and eloquence are devoted to the furtherance of the best interests of the Church. Old dividing lines are no more, and the union is in all respects a happy reality. It is in no sense a poetic figment to say that the brethren dwell together in unity. There is an absence of all party rivalry. Each seems to strive only to secure the peace and prosperity of Zion.

Another perceptible change is noted in the manner of transacting business. Long and elaborate speeches are no longer heard. It is true that no questions seriously agitating the Church, requiring the greatest wisdom and prudence in their treatment have for years been brought before the supreme court. It is none the less true that the expansion of the Church has greatly increased the volume of necessary business to be transacted, so that there is no longer time, and members have not the patience to listen to the well compacted and ornate orations of former days. Debates are less eloquent but far more practical and to the point.

There is, however, no change in the sturdy independence of personal conviction and manly adhesion to the true principle of Presbyterian parity. One lesson taught by the Great Teacher, Call no man master, they seem to have learned thoroughly. As the years

go by there is less and less disposition to tolerate the formation of clerical or other cliques in the management of affairs. The spirit of independence and fairness is too strong for that. Long may this spirit animate those engaged in the work of the Church. It is a distinctive principle of Presbyterianism wherever it exists. It is one professed in common by all the churches of the Reformation.

It has to be conceded that this characteristic love of perfect independence and this scrupulous regard for the rights of all, irrespective of external position, has its occasional drawbacks. Its exercise sometimes causes a regrettable loss of time. But then it would be no relief to transfer important business to committees, however well selected. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty wherever it exists. It is better at times to exercise the grace of patience with wayward and tortuous and apparently unnecessary discussions than to leave room for the imputation of unfairness. Even purposless and tedious debate conduces to a clearer understanding of matters and enables the members to know each other better.

The meetings of the present Assembly have been seasons of enjoyment and profit. The evenings devoted to Home and Foreign Missionary affairs have been widely commented on in the most favourable terms. The arrangements were obviously the result of wise forethought and were admirably carried out. The presence of four foreign missionaries added an unusual interest to the speaking, which was about all that could be desired.

The delegates who met in St. James' Square Church, will retain pleasant memories of the General Assembly of 1884, and the people of Toronto will feel that in entertaining them they have been amply compensated by pleasant and profitable intercourse, new friendships formed and old ones cemented.

"GO WORK IN MY VINEYARD."

WITHOUT incurring the imputation of prejudice and partiality it may with modesty be claimed that Presbyterianism in Canada is advancing not only in numbers and resources, but in spiritual power and influence. Each successive Assembly marks a gain in prosperity, and in greater working efficiency. In almost all that pertains to the more important departments of Christian activity and usefulness, the reports submitted to the present General Assembly show abundant cause for gratitude. The blessings experienced afford additional incentives to renewed consecration and still greater devotedness.

The report submitted by the conveners of the Home Mission Committee, western section, amply bears out the hopes of all most interested in the work of church maintenance and extension. It presents a clear and concise statement of the work accomplished during the year in the wide field over which its supervision extends. The report briefly details what has been done from the eastern limits of Quebec to the Pacific slope. Home mission work in the ancient Province of Quebec is difficult and calls for much self-denial and devotion. Presbyterianism is not unsuited to the genius of the French population there. The history of the Protestant reformation in France, the success of Calvin, Farrel and Beza, the power and influence of the Huguenots attest that the doctrines and polity of Presbyterianism commend themselves to the Gallic heart and intellect; and so on a much humbler scale it is seen in the small but devoted congregations of French Protestants in the Province of Quebec that have cast in their lot with the Presbyterian Church in Canada. It is conceded that the obstacles are great. The moral and spiritual horizon of French Canada is not bounded by the present; the people have a great future before them. It cannot be that the grand truths of the primitive Gospel are for ever to be obscured by the accumulated errors and corruptions of the early and middle ages. The Protestant churches of Canada and the Presbyterian Church among them, has a great work to do in the Province of Quebec. The increase for the year in that section is not large, but still there is an increase, affording reason for thankfulness.

In the Ottawa district good work has been done, but much more might have been accomplished had there been anything approaching an adequate supply of efficient labourers. Those engaged there have proved themselves admirably adapted for that extensive and in some respects difficult field. In the Presbytery of Lanark and Renfrew the Home mission operations have the advantage of possessing the over-