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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.
OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.



REV. ALEXANDER MCKNIGHT, D.D.
PRINCIPAL PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, HALIFAX.
LATE MODERATOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Rev. Alex. McKnight, D.D., who has just retired from the Moderator's chair, was born at Dalmellington, Ayrshire, Scotland. He is a graduate of Glasgow University, and studied theology in the New College, Edinburgh, from 1845 to 1849. He was licensed by the Free Presbytery of Ayr in 1850. In 1854 the Free Synod of Nova Scotia applied to the Colonial Committee for a Hebrew teacher to assist Drs. King and Lyall in the Free College in Halifax. In 1855 Dr. McKnight was sent out to occupy this position. He was at once recognized as a Hebrew scholar of a high order. He was also a capital preacher, and his talents in this line were so appreciated by the congregation at Dartmouth that they called him to be their pastor. He was accordingly ordained at Dartmouth on the 26th January, 1857, and continued in the Dartmouth pastorate till 1868, when he resigned in order to enter upon the position of Professor of Hebrew and exegesis. In 1871, upon the retirement of Rev. Dr. King, he was elected to the chair of Systematic Theology; and Hebrew and Exegesis were placed in the hands of Rev. Dr. Currie. Dr. McKnight is an accomplished Hebraist, and he seldom fails to inspire his students with love for that venerable language; but Systematic Theology was and is his forte. In 1877 he received the degree of D.D. from the University of Glasgow, and in 1878 the title of Principal was conferred on him by the General Assembly. Last year he was elected Moderator of the General Assembly. He has discharged the duties of his high office with ability, tact and courtesy.



REV. W. REID, D.D.,
AGENT OF THE CHURCH—WESTERN SECTION.
JOINT CLERK GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

The Rev. William Reid, D.D. (a native of Aberdeenshire, Scotland), is a graduate of King's College, Aberdeen, where he took the degree of M.A. in 1833. He was licensed to preach the Gospel on 1st May, 1839, and shortly after came to Canada as a missionary of the Church of Scotland. His first charge was Grafton and Colborne, in what was then the Presbytery of Kingston. In 1849 he was translated to Picton, in the County of Prince Edward, where he remained till 1853, when he was removed to Toronto as General Agent for the schemes of the Church and editor of the *Record*. With various modifications of his duties, Dr. Reid has remained in the same position till the present

time. In 1853 the Presbyterian Church of Canada, with which he was connected, had 87 ministers. After the various unions which have taken place there are now considerably upwards of 700 ministers. Dr. Reid has seen one disruption, that of 1844, and three unions. In 1840 the United Synod of Upper Canada joined the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland. In 1861 the Presbyterian Church of Canada and the United Presbyterian Church united under the name of the Canada Presbyterian Church. In 1875 the larger union of the several Presbyterian Churches in the Dominion took place, forming the Presbyterian Church in Canada. In 1876 Dr. Reid received the honorary degree of D.D. from Queen's University, Kingston. Dr. Reid was in 1850 elected Moderator of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada; in 1871 occupied the chair as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Canada Presbyterian Church, and in 1879 was Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

THE NEW MODERATOR.

The new Moderator, Rev. J. K. Smith, A.M., pastor of Knox Church, Galt, is a native of Aberdeen, Scotland, where he was born in 1827. He received his education in arts in Marischal College, Aberdeen, and in theology in Edinburgh, under Drs. Chalmers, Cunningham and

REV. W. FRASER, D.D.

Rev. William Fraser, D.D., was born near Glasgow, Nova Scotia, on May 19th, 1808, studied theology under Thos. McCulloch, D.D., Principal of Pictou Academy, and was ordained Sept. 2, 1834, a missionary to the Gaelic-speaking people of Western Canada. On the 9th August, 1835, he was inducted into the pastoral charge of congregations in West Gwillimbury, County Simcoe, with which were associated from time to time other congregations. On the 1st June, 1879, "after a lengthened, faithful and effective service," to quote the words of Dr. Gregg in his "History of Presbyterianism," "he retired from the active duties of the ministry. He now resides in the town of Barrie, near the scene of his former labours, and as occasion offers continues to preach the Gospel with great acceptance. He is the sole survivor of the ministers who organized the Missionary Presbytery of the Secession Church of 1834. In 1851 Mr. Fraser succeeded Mr. Proudfoot as Clerk of the United Presbyterian Synod, and has ever since discharged with singular ability and accuracy the duties of Clerk of the Synods and Assemblies of the United Presbyterian Church, the Canada Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in Canada. In 1876 the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on him by the University of Queen's College, Kingston." Dr. Fraser has two sons in the ministry—Rev. J. B. Fraser, M.D., Leith, and Rev. R. D. Fraser, M.A., Bowmanville.

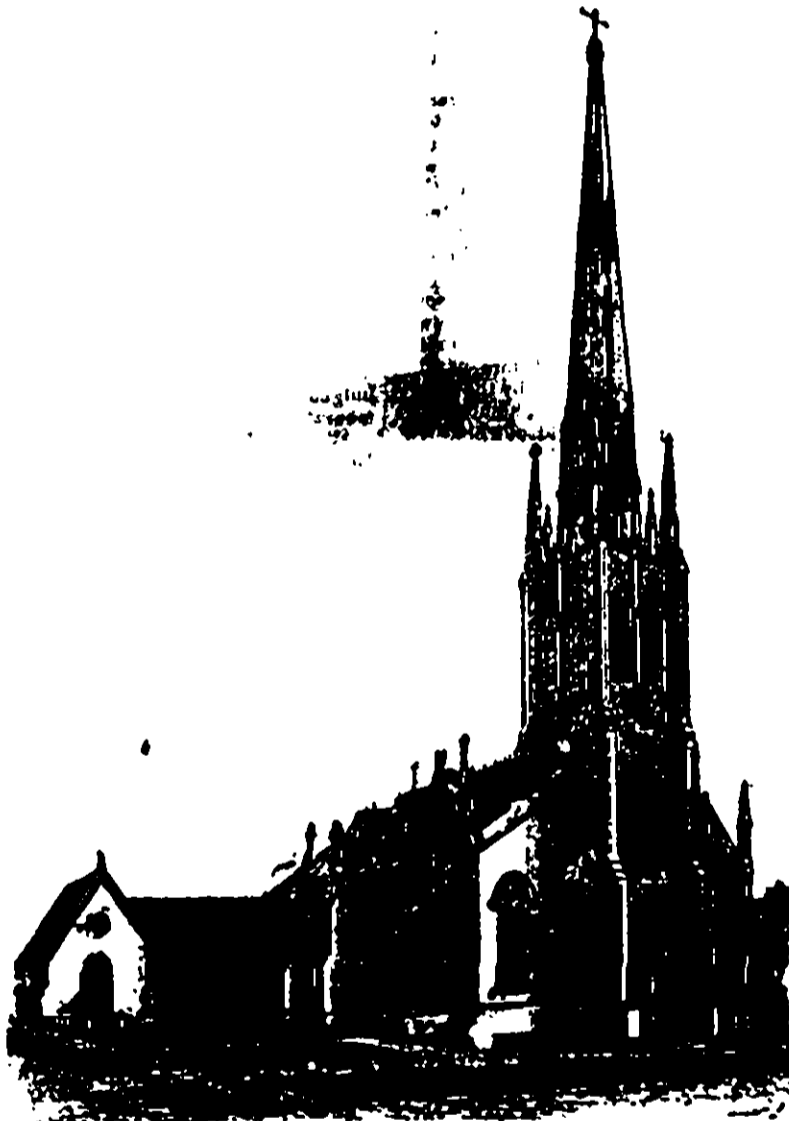
PRESBYTERIANISM IN HAMILTON AND VICINITY.

PRESBYTERIANISM appeared in the Niagara peninsula early in this century. Soon after the war of 1812 settlers came into the country from Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Many of these, indeed, most of them, were Presbyterians, and that, too, of a stamp so decided that when missionaries from the United States came among them, those missionaries, though Congregationalists, found it desirable to adopt the Presbyterian polity, in order that their Christian influence might more readily be brought to bear upon the people to whom they had come. It would



REV. J. K. SMITH, M.A.,
MODERATOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

have been good if their influence had been allowed to continue. Their ministrations are among the cherished traditions of the Niagara peninsula, even among many families no longer of our communion. Those families might have been a preserving salt amid a population much needing its savour, and might have been an effective Christian organization had they continued in the communion of the Presbyterian Church. They are now unfortunately broken up into little knots of helpless sectaries, forming a spectacle, it is feared, by no means wholesome to the large number of irreligious people who dwell in this frontier portion of Ontario; and making little or no good impression upon them. The Presbytery of Hamilton has now within its bounds a mission field as needy as any presbytery in Ontario, and a field more difficult to work than most. In course of time ministers from Scotland began to arrive in this part of Canada. They were doubtless good and able men, but they had no sympathy with what they thought to be the irregular practices of American Presbyterians. Indeed, they had a distrust of everything American, and were apparently persuaded that a conversion from American modes was as important as any other conversion. It is not surprising, but it is most unfortunate that a strong anti-American feeling possessed all the new-comers to Canada immediately prior to and after the events of 1837. In the Niagara district there was formed the nucleus of a Church having severe Scottish features. The old families did not like the



ST. PAUL'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, HAMILTON.
MEETING PLACE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 1886.

others. He was licensed by Aberdeen Presbytery in 1852, and had two calls to parishes, one from Maybole, in Ayrshire, and one from Forfar, Forfarshire. He preached only three months in Scotland, but was not settled. He came to Canada in 1853, and was settled in Ramsay, Lanark Co. After three years he went to Brockville, becoming pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, in which Mr. Smart, one of the fathers of the Church in Canada, had ministered for very many years. Thence he went to Galt. After some time the illness of his wife made it necessary for him to go with her to California. He lived one year in San Francisco, and had charge of the First Presbyterian Church there, and was called to the pastorate but decided to return to Canada, which he did, and received charge of his church in Galt. He was called to Halifax, where he spent two years as pastor of Fort Massey Church, after which he again returned to Galt, where he has since remained. He has the distinction of being pastor of the largest Presbyterian Church in Canada, the membership being over a thousand. Under his ministrations a handsome large church has been built capable of seating 1,400 people. Mr. Smith is a man of more than average height, of fair complexion, and with a frank, kindly expression of feature. He excels not only as a preacher, but as an organizer of the forces of his church, and is exceedingly popular. He has been for years identified with the educational interests of Galt, being Chairman of the College Institute Board.

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, HAMILTON.

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, the building in which the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church is gathered this year, as may be seen from our illustration, is a very handsome and imposing structure. It is acknowledged to be one of the finest specimens of Gothic architecture in the Dominion. Its handsome spire, stone to the summit, its richly carved turrets, its imported Cathedral glass windows, and its costly fittings representing the best varieties of old oak work, mark it as a fitting place for the meeting of the venerable court now convened within its walls. It occupies the site of the original St. Andrew's Church erected over fifty years ago, and on the Church of Scotland side is the direct successor of that pioneer Church, as Knox Church is the successor on the Free side. The present edifice was opened for worship in 1857, having cost about \$60,000, of which \$30,000 was in the form of a debt upon the congregation. Circumstances occurred in connection with this heavy burden which subsequently led to the closing of the church for a time. During the past eight years, however, this interesting historic church has enjoyed uninterrupted prosperity, the total debt having been reduced to less than \$16,000. The Church as stated elsewhere has now a membership of 510 communicants, with a large and flourishing Sabbath School and various other organizations for the successful carrying on of Church work. Much of this happy state of things is due to the present pastor, Rev. R. J. Laidlaw.



REV. W. FRASER, D.D.,
JOINT CLERK GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

austerity which was being imposed upon them, they thought that all cheerfulness and social enjoyment were being banished from their religious meetings, and in great numbers they deserted what seemed to them an alien cause. In fact the new settlers and the old misunderstood each other. There can be no doubt that if the Scottish ministers had possessed the consideration and the practical sagacity of their American predecessors the Presbyterian Church would not have lost the hold which it once had in the region between Hamilton and the Niagara river, and to regain which hold the present Presbytery of Hamilton, finds its efforts most difficult.

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