

will admit that this Assembly is fortunate in this respect. Dr. Robertson is good tempered, patient and courteous, yet will allow no trilling, gives his rulings promptly, treats all impartially, is well known to the Assembly, and perhaps knows personally more of its members than any other man in it, or in the Church, and the business is going on smoothly, although not as yet very fast, apparently.

STANDING MEMBERS.

Although a representative body, chosen a part every year, the continuity of the Assembly is well preserved by the appearance in it, year after year, besides its standing officials, of certain fathers and brethren, whose familiarity with the work of the Church in its several different departments, and whose business ability and judgment are so well known and highly esteemed that, either in the order of rotation or by choice, they are found at every Assembly, and it would hardly look quite like itself if they were not there. Of these the most conspicuous are, of course, the clerks, next the conveners or other officials of its great committees: Drs. Cochrane, Warden, Morrison, Mr. Hamilton Cassels, Dr. Torrance; and in this class, the Principals of the colleges, who are all men whose services to the Church, not only in their own special departments, but in the Church courts, are invaluable. These men—not any of them—are leaders, in the sense that the Church courts in Scotland are understood to have leaders, in the sense that any one of them has a following, or can exercise a controlling personal influence in the court. No one of them thinks it or would attempt it, and, if he did, it would be promptly resented. The court is conspicuously democratic and independent, and the only leading it will accept or follow is that which consists in having a just cause, and a high personal character apart from all maneuvering or partyism.

VISITORS.

The Assembly generally is honoured with some distinguished visitors to convey friendly greetings and the fraternal salutations of other bodies, or former members of the Church who have become attached to other sister bodies, but who can come back to their old home on a visit from time to time. These are always welcome, and to see and hear them again creates a pleasant thrill of feeling, and awakens, for the most part, very pleasant memories of former days and old associations. This Assembly so far, has not been so marked by the presence of such visitors as is often the case, the Rev. Dr. Matthews, the secretary of the Alliance of Reformed Churches of the Presbyterian order, being the only one who has yet addressed the Assembly, and the Rev. Dr. Waters, now of Newark, New Jersey, being the only well known minister of the Church of former days who has yet put in an appearance.

STANDING SUBJECTS.

In the Church of Britain, besides Church subjects proper, there are often great standing questions before them of a wider character, semi-political sometimes, as the Disestablishment question in Scotland and Wales. We do not usually have questions of this nature, the complete separation, understood to be, of Church and state, helping much to keep such questions out of the ecclesiastical arena. The Manitoba School question will furnish an exception this year. Notice of a comprehensive and most carefully worded motion on this subject has been given by Rev. Principal Caven, protesting against interference with Manitoba, in its school legislation and embracing the Church and State question. Amendments it is expected will be made. The discussion was fixed for Tuesday last, and an able and vigorous treatment of the whole subject may be looked for.

Our great questions fortunately are more spiritual, not to say ecclesiastical—Home and Foreign Missions, French Evangelization, Temperance, Sabbath Observance, State of Religion, Sabbath Schools. These being largely dealt with in the evening are the occasions of large and interesting meetings being held. Those on Home and Foreign Missions take the lead, and it would be difficult to surpass in interest those meetings which have this year been held in connection with these subjects. On the Foreign Mission evening, the platform was fully occupied, and almost all on it had seen active service, some of them for many years on the foreign field, or among heathen at home, or were about to leave for foreign service. It was Dr. Mackay's farewell occasion, as also Mr.

Fisher Campbell's, and such an assemblage from the foreign field, it is safe to say, has never been seen in connection with our Church.

The Home Mission meeting was also a noble one, the audience fully the larger of the two, but lacking in what may be called, not the dramatic interest, perhaps, but the effective setting of the former. Home missionaries were there who could tell a tale of thrilling interest of work at home, hardships endured, amid mountain wilds, and success achieved in lumber camps and on prairie, and it was felt by many to be a loss that they did not get more opportunity to tell it.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Of a different kind, but a meeting of very peculiar interest, and one sacred with most hallowed memories, and increasingly so as it will be observed by the Assembly in the coming years, is the observance together by the members of the Assembly and by others who desire to do so of the Lord's supper. It was a season of blessing, of devout, reverent worship and loving, Christian fellowship. The Moderator, in his simple robe of office, with the ex-Moderator on the one hand, and Principal MacVicar on the other, all striking figures, accompanied by a body of elders, some of them long and well known in the Church for their character and services, and before them full in view the mute but expressive emblems of the passion of Christ, were of themselves an impressive sight. Add to this the appearance of some, the thought of others, men and women of hoary head or trembling limbs, missionaries going to distant lands, whom we shall see nor whose voice we shall hear at all again; young men just putting their armour on, fathers and brethren gathered from North and South, from East and West, all sitting together and never again all to sit together; the words spoken and the speakers, the glad, yet solemn songs of praise and thanksgiving, the audible prayers poured out from full hearts, the hushed stillness, the silent prayers ascending, all made an impression and left behind memories which can never be forgotten. No wonder it was a solemn and blessed season. It represented and expressed the unity of all Christians, for all were welcome, and especially the unity and real oneness of our whole Church from ocean to ocean with vividness and outstanding reality, in such a way as it could by no other means be so powerfully expressed.

ITS SOCIAL USES.

Apart from its necessary Church and Christian uses, the social value of the Assembly is very great. It is very great in enabling the members of our Church in its place of meeting from time to time to know and become acquainted with ministers and elders from all parts of the Church, and these latter again from all parts of the country to meet either as old friends or to form new friendships. No Assembly passes but much of this is done. No Assembly breaks up without brethren from the sea on either side having seen and learned more of those inland between, and these latter having made friends among the former. This greatly strengthens the feeling and consciousness, though scattered far apart, of our Church being one body, deepens mutual personal interest, and common interest in the whole work of the Church. It is one of those things which greatly promote and foster, what we so much need, as yet, a national spirit and sentiment of brotherhood as being all Canadians from Halifax to Vancouver. It is sometimes spoken of and will yet probably come, when an annual Assembly shall give place to a biennial or triennial one, but for the present and for some years to come, yet, we shall both as a church and people need, and be much the better for this and all such means of bringing our people together from all parts of the country, as a means of uniting us into a whole, not only as a Church, but also as a means of infusing into and inspiring us with the zeal, lasting spirit and bond of union consciously felt and gloried in of being one Canadian people and from end to end of it one Dominion.

Dr. Matthews, secretary of the Presbyterian Alliance, said that the doctrine of some branches of the Presbyterian Church is so blue that you have to look closely to distinguish it from black. There are ninety varieties of Presbyterians. The difference between some of these churches, especially in Scotland, is so slight that it is like splitting a hair into four parts to distinguish their theology.

Books and Magazines.

IN THE TIME OF JESUS. By Rev. Martin Seidel, D.D. A. D. F. Randolph & Co., New York.

This is a volume of only about two hundred pages but it contains a vast amount of very useful information presented in a most readable form. It deals concisely with the manners, the morals and the religions of the heathen world at the time when Jesus came, and it also describes in a brief, yet admirable way, the land, the people, the politics, the parties, the religious council, and the religious sects of Palestine. There is a chapter on the Messianic hope and another on the Judaism of the Dispersion. Other writers, such as Eidersheim, may deal more fully with some of these subjects, but there is scarcely a point of importance which is not clearly presented. A chronological table, and a table of contents, make the volume a very convenient one for reference, and any student or teacher who possesses a copy will likely refer to it very frequently.

WHY DO YOU NOT BELIEVE? By Rev. Andrew Murray. Anson D. F. Randolph & Co., New York.

When it is said that this work is written by Rev. Andrew Murray, and that it is translated from the Dutch into English by Rev. J. P. Lilley, M.A., the author of a prize essay on the Sabbath, perhaps no more need be said. Almost every one knows of the sweet devotional strain which runs through all of Andrew Murray's writings. This book, however, as its title imports, is addressed to those who are anxious, but who have not yet found peace in believing. It contains thirty-one short chapters on such subjects as, The Absolute Necessity of Faith; The Object of Faith; The Seed of Faith; The Language of Faith, etc. It is a capital book to put into the hands of young people who have not yet found Christ. The Christian worker who studies it will find much in it to help him in directing anxious inquirers.

NEW LIGHT ON THE OLD PRAYER. Wm. Briggs, Toronto.

This is a brief exposition of the Lord's Prayer by the Rev. Professor Campbell, LL.D., of the Presbyterian College, Montreal. It is well named. It will certainly throw to very many, to nearly all we fancy who read it, a new light upon the old, familiar Lord's Prayer. It is devout and reverent in tone and spirit, and while the writer's well known views respecting the Evil One secure prominence, no one can read this exposition without profit, and to many it will invest it with a wealth of meaning, make it a source of comfort, and a means of devout and exalted worship such as they never found it to be before reading it. It is worthy of wide circulation.

The New Galaxy is the name of a magazine shortly to be placed before the public. Its object is to supply a kind of reading which will not only be interesting and instructive to all, but which also will be of the highest class, and above severely adverse criticism from anyone. The intention in this new venture is not to compete with others, but on the contrary to avoid that class of material which others are in the habit of using, and exploit a class of matter even more attractive to the general reader. The publisher believes that the great mass of readers want to find in a periodical: First, beautiful new pictures; second, the best stories and short articles, always bright and readable; third, confidence that they can trust wholly in the accuracy of what they read. These three things *The New Galaxy* will keep in mind. It will reject mere sensationalism and trash, and will give something worth reading and readable. [Harry C. Jones, Editor and Publisher, 92, 94 and 96 Fifth Avenue, New York City.]

The Cosmopolitan for June well illustrates what an infinity of subjects is to be found suitable for illustration, and how in this way interest can be thrown into the commonest things when the illustrations are so tasteful as they are in this dainty magazine. Appropriate to the season it opens with, "Bathing at the Continental Sea-shore Resorts," "The Chautauqua Movement," "The Pleasant Occupation of Tending Bees," "The Paris Salons," "An Indian story of Serria Madre," "Whist in America," with the story, "A Three Stranded Yarn continued," all illustrated, are the chief articles, to which are added some short poems, "Progress of Science," "In the World of Art and Letters," and "The Paris Salons of 1895." [The Cosmopolitan, Irvington, New York.]

To us the *Ladies' Home Journal* for June is not as attractive as usual. The cover, usually so artistic, is a very ordinary affair, but this defect promises to be remedied in the July issue. Neither is the reading matter of much interest to the masculine persuasion. We have been wont to look upon this periodical, the name to the contrary notwithstanding, as appealing considerably to the manhood of the country. But this is a piece of presumption on our part; and when an essentially woman's number appears no complaint is at all justifiable. [The Curtis Publishing Company, Philadelphia, Penn.]

Godey's Magazine for June is up to the mark in respect of literary and artistic excellence. Those who are afflicted with Trilbymania will read with considerable interest an article on "Trilby as a Play." "How Tweed was Detected" is a succinct recital of the events of a famous period. "Godey's Fashions" will, as usual, prove valuable to the fair sex. "The Choir Boy of Trinity" is a pretty little story, and is the first of a number of short pieces of fiction in this number. [The Godey Company, 52 Lafayette Place, New York City.]

The Literary Digest, for June 1st, comes to hand, as all the Funk and Wagnalls Company publications do, promptly. This number is filled with well assorted information and condensed articles from all sources on "Topics of the Day," "Letters and Art," "Science," "The Religious World," "From Foreign Lands and Miscellaneous." [Funk and Wagnalls Co., 30 Lafayette Place, New York.]