

able state of the funds give, as we said, an exceptional opportunity for the devotional side of duty and for deliberating upon means for bringing about a deepening of the spiritual life.

The reports which we have had the privilege of perusing are on the whole satisfactory, some of them extremely so. They will reveal faithful, hard, work on the part of the committees all along the line. It would be difficult to single out any committee for exceptional praise where all have shown most praiseworthy devotion to the interests entrusted to them. That there will be critics and fault-finding brethren may be taken for granted. They are the necessary thorns in the flesh. Without them committees, and some men, would be infallible. Their function is to remind us that even Conveners and Moderators are merely human. Their discomfiture will be manifest to all when the reports are read, for not for many years, we may venture to affirm, can less be said in dispraise, or more in praise of the committees than can be said this year. It has been a year of many and great opportunities and the church has nobly risen to the occasion, surmounted difficulties and made advances in work which in years to come will be appreciated even more than now. The General Assembly will not fail to render to the leaders in these departures the praise and the encouragement they so richly deserve.

WELCOME TO THE ASSEMBLY.

THE PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW, which is now published in Montreal as well as in Toronto, and so has some claim to speak in the name of Montreal Presbyterianism, extends a hearty welcome to the General Assembly and prays that the most abundant success may attend its meeting in the commercial metropolis of the Dominion. The history of Presbyterianism in Canada is closely associated with this city. Here have been fought some of the bitterest contests between the adherents of diverse ideas within its fold. It is pleasing to set over against that the fact that here its two most important unions have been consummated—that of 1861 between the Free and the U.P. Churches, and that of 1875 when practically all the Presbyterians of the Dominion became fused into one grand organization.

Since 1875 the Assembly has met three times in Montreal, in 1880, in 1885 and again in 1892. This then makes the fifth meeting in twenty three years, which has been held at this point. All the previous ones have been of a pleasant character and have been marked by excellent work. We feel sure that this will maintain the honorable record. That there will be honest differences of opinion goes without saying when Presbyterians meet. But that all will loyally support the conclusions reached, whatever these may be, we venture to predict. And if loyally supported we feel sure they will be for the moral and spiritual good of the country.

We need hardly say we shall be pleased to welcome any and all of the commissioners who may honor us with a call at our office in the fourth flat of the Y.M.C.A., Building adjoining Knox Church.

FAITHLESS SENATORS.

THE Senate has been discussing the Plebiscite Bill and, as might be expected from the past record of many of them they have been throwing cold water on Prohibition as a means of checking intemperance. The cry that Prohibition will not prohibit is of course

no new one, and it is no more weighty from the lips of Senators than from other people. But unfortunately it must be confessed that they have more power than many others to render it abortive. The great difficulty in the way of carrying it out comes not from the besotted members of the laboring classes. These can be effectually dealt with when occasion demands. It comes from men and women in high social positions who have so much selfishness and so little patriotism that they are not willing to make any personal sacrifices for the good of their suffering fellow countrymen. They are a comparatively small minority of the population but when they violate or evade the law, it is almost impossible to convict them or deal out adequate penalties. Let them honestly set the example and lend the weight of their influence to carrying out this law as they do to most other laws, and it can be carried out so as at least to diminish very greatly the evils that now flow from the licensed sale of intoxicants.

It is all very well for them too to urge moral suasion upon the temperance people as the means of restricting the abuse of intoxicants. They have already done their fair share of that and with some success by way of prevention through the education of the young. But they have a right to ask that when they are rescuing individual drunkards the State shall refrain from authorizing a traffic that ever recruits the ranks of the falling, and shall do all it can to remove temptation from the weak. The State will never know how much it can do in that direction until it makes at least one honest effort to accomplish it.

INTIMIDATION.

THAT the Liquor Traffic has a genuine dread of the result of the approaching Plebiscite is evident from a circular said to have been sent out recently by a well known firm of distillers in Ontario to all the religious and charitable organizations to which they have been giving subscriptions that these will be withheld until, at least, the vote is taken.

We do not know what the extent of their benefactions has been. Possibly they may have been large. Those of distillers and brewers often are. But however large, we are certain that they have never been large enough to compensate for a tithe of the evil they have inflicted on the community by the products they turn out.

Nor can we say we are very much surprised that they should now withhold their aid from religious organizations. These organizations are undoubtedly the instinctive foes of the traffic which gives them their wealth. The only wonder is that they have not long ago recognized this and declined to give aid and comfort to the enemy.

But we must say it seems a small business for them to announce this decision to their wanted beneficiaries on the eve of an election, where it can be interpreted only as an attempt to intimidate a few weak friends of prohibition. People who are likely to be influenced by considerations of that kind deserve to have all contributions withheld from their hands as being wholly unfit to administer them for the public, and we cannot believe that any of our churches or other religious institutions are so lost to all sense of decency as to allow their course to be determined by it in the slightest degree. Better that these institutions should perish than live on such conditions. Still less can we conceive of any worthy institution deliberately throwing the weight of its influence against prohibition in order to win the support of the liquor manufacturers. To put it on no higher grounds such a policy would almost