

to autocratic government. They are between the two extremes, and the successful administration of Church affairs lies in the maintenance of harmony between the two factors, the congregation and the Presbytery, and also between the pulpit and the pew. Most people go to church service and prayer-meeting and consider their duty over when they have done so. But the Presbyterian Church is a unity of all its parts, and the interest of members extends from their own congregations to all the Church. Therefore, the welfare of the ecclesiastical body demands an intelligent knowledge of the constitution of the Church, and that constitution shows not only the inter-dependence of the branches, but the responsibilities resting upon the members and the rights and privileges of the members in the courts of the Church. Perhaps members would feel less aggrieved when judged against by pastor or Presbytery were they to consider that more than mere local or personal interests may be at stake. Ministers have often to complain that their people do not study the history and the constitution of their own church as they ought, and there is much in the complaint. The most useful members may not be the best informed on church law and order, but a knowledge of these goes far to help in the orderly conduct of the business and to a right understanding of the relations between the members, ministers and courts of the Church.

#### THE WAR.

THE United States has declared war against Spain, and justifies its action on humanitarian grounds, pure and simple, disclaiming all idea of conquest. In the event of its being successful it can hardly avoid assuming such a protectorate over Cuba as will make it virtually United States territory, but notwithstanding this there is no need to call in question the sincerity of its motives in the main, as a nation, whatever may be true of individuals. One can hardly conceive of any higher ground on which war could ever be justified, and our sympathy must be with the United States in the struggle, now that it has begun.

One cannot help feeling, however, that the American people have allowed themselves to be somewhat unduly hurried into the conflict by resentment at the blowing up of the Maine, the responsibility for which Spain utterly disclaimed, showing her good faith by offering to submit the question to arbitration. Because of this resentment some of the resources of diplomacy were left untried. Further delay might not have averted war, but it would have made the case of the United States in resorting to the arbitrament of the sword much stronger than it is now. Her cause is fundamentally a just one, but one could wish that the necessity of employing force to secure her demands had been made more apparent.

The intervention of the United States on behalf of Cuba is a recognition of the obligation resting upon her, as the strongest sovereign power on the Western hemisphere, to police the two Americas, or in other words to maintain a reasonable degree of order and good government among her smaller neighbors. This is the positive side of the Monroe doctrine which hitherto has been confined for the most part to assertions that no European power had that right. We do not know that this police duty could be in better hands, and we can only hope that she will exercise it with moderation as well as with firmness.

But the people of the United States owe other obligations to the Spanish-American nationalities beyond that of maintaining order and good government. They are bound also to educate and evangelize

them so as to qualify them for self-government. In this respect they have hitherto done little. Millions have been spent in educating and evangelizing the peoples of Asia, both Christian and heathen, while but thousands have been doled out for such purposes in Central and South America. Cuba, which lies nearest of all, has been entirely overlooked in this respect, no American Church, so far as we know, having a mission of any kind on the island. One of the results of this war ought to be to stimulate the missionary interest of the churches in the nations that lie at their door. Though nominally Christian, they certainly need their aid as much as the Armenian or Nestorian Churches of Western Asia.

#### THE WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF 1899.

THE Commission of the Alliance of the Reformed Churches (Western section) met in the Wither-  
spoon Building, Philadelphia, on the 14th inst. The attendance was large, both forenoon and afternoon. The Canadian members present were Principals MacVicar and Caven and Dr. Cochrane. The building in which they met is a magnificent piece of Presbyterian property, worth over a million dollars. A large amount of business was transacted. The programme for the next meeting of the Council in Washington occupied considerable time, and is sufficiently comprehensive and varied in its contents. The meetings will extend from Sept. 27th to Oct. 6th 1899, and the general order is to be two papers at each sederunt followed by discussion.

All the subjects selected are full of significance and will no doubt be handled by able writers and debaters. The papers for the first forenoon will be on (1) The duties of the office-bearers of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches (a) The minister; (b) The Elder; (c) The Deacon. (2) The History and Work of the Alliance for the first quarter of a century.

Home and Foreign Missions, Women's Missionary Societies, missionary methods and kindred subjects receive due prominence. There are to be papers upon The Apologetic and missionary value of the study of Comparative Religion, and on the Bible in relation to recent Archaeological Discoveries.

In former meetings of this great Council Canadian Delegates did credit to their church and country, and we feel sure the General Assembly will take care that we shall be suitably represented at Washington.

#### CHURCH TRUSTEES.

A CONSERVATIVE estimate would put the value of the sites and buildings, belonging to the Presbyterian Church in Canada, at twenty million dollars. The ownership in all cases is with the individual congregations and not with the church as a whole, though ordinarily properties cannot be sold or mortgaged without the consent of the Presbytery. In a few instances churches have special acts of incorporation. But in the great majority the properties are held by trustees for the congregation under general acts of the several Provincial Legislatures, empowering them to do so, and defining their rights. Model trust deeds have been prepared by competent legal authorities and are recommended for use in taking conveyance of all property for church purposes. But even where other forms are used the acts are drawn in such a way as to supply the defects which most frequently occur, such as a partial definition of the object of the trust, and the absence of any provision for appointing successors to the original trustees. Unless it be in the North West Territories, where we