

Church, whose pulpit was draped with the sad emblems of mourning. The Rev. A. P. Smith, D.D., who was a delegate of the Southern Church to the General Council of the Alliance of the Reformed Churches which meet in Toronto in 1892, and who presided at one of its sessions, was pastor of this church, and had entered into rest after a painful illness only a few days before the Assembly met. He was a native of South Carolina, and for over twenty years had done faithful work in Dallas, Texas, where he had built up a strong church. He was a wise and able minister, yet in the prime of a life when called home. It was meet that a memorial service should be held by the Assembly.

The Assembly had nearly two hundred commissioners. The unit of representation is one in twenty-four. That is, if a Presbytery has twenty-four ministers, or fewer, it sends one minister and one ruling elder to the Assembly. If over twenty-four ministers are in a Presbytery, it may send two ministers. Now there are seventy-three Presbyteries in our Church, and a number of these are entitled to send four members, so that nearly two hundred commissioners made up the body. It is so remarkable as to be worthy of mention, that every commissioner, or his alternate, was present, so that there was not a single absentee. Presbyteries pay the travelling expenses of their commissioners in the South, while the Northern Church pays these expenses out of its Assembly Fund. This payment however made, is important in securing a full attendance, and diligent services.

The opening sermon was preached by the retiring Moderator, Rev. J. R. Graham, D.D., of Virginia. The theme was the "Kingship of Christ," and it was an able, suitable and helpful sermon, and not longer than the average sermon.

The Assembly was constituted, and the Rev. Charles R. Hemphill, D.D., LL.D., Professor in the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, was elected moderator by acclamation, and he made an excellent presiding officer. He is a native of South Carolina, a graduate of the University of Virginia, and of Columbia Seminary. He was, for a time, Professor in Columbia, and at Clarksville, and now holds the chair of New Testament Greek in Louisville Seminary, and is pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of which Rev. Stuart Robinson, D.D., well known in Toronto, was pastor for twenty-three years. Dr. Hemphill is one of the youngest Moderators, being only forty-five years of age.

No detailed account of the proceedings of the Assembly can be given. There was no question which caused any serious controversy, or evoked marked difference of opinion. There was only one "appeal case," and it was settled by a "commission," whose decision seemed to meet with general approval; even though there were some irregularities in the way in which the case came up.

It was an eminently practical looking Assembly. The year had been a good one in nearly all departments, and in spite of the depression in business, good reports were presented so that the hearts of the brethren were greatly cheered. In mission work, in the theological seminaries, in the work among the colored people, and in other lines of service there was expansion, and progress, which indicated in a large measure the Divine blessing attending the labors and gifts of the year.

The various schemes of the Church are conducted by somewhat small committees appointed by the Assembly, and located at different centres with a secretary in charge. Home Missions are centered in Atlanta, Ga., Foreign Missions at Nashville, Tenn., Publication at Richmond, Va., Education at Memphis, Tenn., and Colored Work at Tuscaloosa, Ala. In this way the best results are supposed to be attained, and certainly the reports from these and other schemes were encouraging this year. There was progress made, and scarcely any debt

on any Fund. Some figures will be added towards the close of this article.

Several important matters were acted on by the Assembly, and brief allusion to these should be made.

One was the relation of this Assembly to the Northern Assembly, as it is popularly called. The question of closer relations between these two bodies came up by several overtures from Presbyteries and Synods. With great harmony, and almost without discussion, the conclusion was reached that "this Assembly does not deem it wise, under existing conditions, to agitate the questions submitted in these overtures. It avails itself of this occasion, however, to place again on record its sentiments of sincere regard and Christian affection for that honoured branch of the great Presbyterian family, between whom and ourselves close fraternal relations already exist. And we now renew the expression of our desire that the plan of co-operation in Christian work, both at home and abroad, which has been agreed to by our respective Assemblies, may be always faithfully and cordially observed by both these Churches."

There can be no doubt that this was the wise and right thing to do at present, for there are very serious obstacles in the way of organic union between these two bodies, as matters now stand between them.

Another important action was the arrangement to organize a separate or independent African Presbyterian Church. This all along has been the policy of the Southern Church, and the Assembly deemed this the proper time to seek to carry this into effect. There are several Presbyteries of colored people and ministers already organized, and a committee, with Rev. J. L. Girardeau, D.D., of Columbia, S.C., as chairman, was appointed to carry out the further organization of this Church. This proposal does not mean that the colored people shall be cut off from aid and support by the Southern Assembly. It simply implies that so soon as they become able for self support they shall be set apart into a separate organization, and aided by the gifts of the Assembly. Stillman Institute will train ministers for them, and the collection will be taken as usual to aid the colored ministers in their work whenever needed. This is the fixed policy which the Southern Assembly thinks is best for both races under the existing conditions. The problem involved is an exceedingly difficult one, and if united effort by means of which the Northern money, and the Southern knowledge of the negroes could be united, were possible, more advance might be seen in all lines of this work.

Sabbath Observance, Young People's Societies, the conditions of Licensure and Ordination, and other matters, were all discussed, and conservative conclusions reached in every case. There was no disposition to try anything new hurriedly, and yet a readiness to consider everything fully and earnestly, as the freedom of debate amply shows.

There are three theological seminaries and a divinity school which made good reports to the Assembly. Union Seminary, Virginia, reported seventy students; Columbia, thirty-seven; Louisville, fifty-two; and Clarksville, thirty-three. Increase in endowments and additions to the teaching force were also reported. The number of candidates for the ministry is increasing, but it is not yet adequate to meet the need.

There are many other things which one would like to add in regard to the orderly way in which business is conducted by the Assembly, its general temper and tone as loyal to the Word of God and the principles of Presbyterianism, its clear grasp of the spirituality of the Church and her mission in the world, and other points of interest, but these must be omitted in the meantime.

A few figures are added in conclusion. The membership is about 205,000, slightly larger than the Presbyterian Church in Canada. There are thirteen Synods and seventy-three Presbyteries. There are over 1,100 ministers, and about 2,600 Churches. Many of the latter would be ranked as mission stations in Canada. The sum of \$133,000 was raised for Foreign Missions. Eleven new missionaries are to sail next August for their fields of labour. For Home Missions, by the Assembly, Synods, and Presbyteries, about the same amounts would be expended, though it is not easy to get all the figures here. For education of the ministry \$23,000 was raised; for Publication and Colportage, nearly \$7,000; for Aged Ministers' Fund, nearly \$13,000, were given. In general it will

be seen that in many respects the Southern Church exhibits about the same strength as the Church in Canada. Both branches of the great Presbyterian family have reason to be very thankful to the Head of the Church for His manifold mercy to them during the past year. With so many things in common as these two Churches have, and with much to cheer them in their common work, although their fields lie so far apart, may they both go forward with renewed zeal to the blessing and service of another year.

THE TRUE SERVANT OF CHRIST IN THE GOSPEL MINISTRY AND THE OPPOSITE.

The true servant of Christ heard the Master's voice, "Son, give me thy heart," and he then dedicated himself, soul, body and spirit, with all his powers to the service of Christ for time and eternity. Then he looked up into the Master's face and asked "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" And He replied, "Deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Me. Give Me always the first place in your thoughts and desires and in all your ways, and set My glory before you as your chief end in life. Seek not your treasures on earth for 'where your treasure is there will your heart be also.' Devote your whole time and strength to the service of Christ in seeking the conversion of sinners and the edification of God's people. Like the Apostles be content with such things as He gives, even food and raiment and a home." Having entered on this course he devotes his whole time to the one object of his life, the advancement of the cause of his Lord and Master, and the salvation of souls. He labors night and day only for this one object, and devotes fourteen hours or more daily to hard work, mental and physical, to it alone; and he desires and pleads for souls to be given him for his reward. He is content with nothing short of this, and is delighted above all things when many precious souls are led by him to believe in Jesus for their salvation. If he is tempted to turn aside from his life work for Jesus to make money by dealing in real estate or otherwise he absolutely refuses to do so, for he feels that it is inconsistent with his office, and would injure his usefulness in the service of Christ; and he feels that this is of far more importance than any amount of money or wealth. Some ministers might have made a large amount of money by real estate during the boom years ago, but would not thus turn aside from their proper work, and were content to remain poor, having made nothing but what little private property they had apart from their salary. They also gave yearly to the church at least one-tenth, and in some cases one-fifth of their entire income. Thus in old age they are compelled to accept aid from the Aged Ministers' Fund. But they are happy in knowing that they have led some thousands to Christ and into communion with His church.

Now look at the contrast to this. There are men who never amounted to anything as pastors or workers for Christ, who scarcely gathered any into the fold of the Good Shepherd. Their hearts set on money making, they secure some public situation in church work, where they have a large salary, and then devote a great part of their time to amassing property for themselves by real estate business or otherwise until they have accumulated wealth, and then they speak contemptuously of those ministers who give their whole time and thought to the service of the Master, but who made no money by it even as the apostles made none. Asked for help to the Aged Ministers' Fund, they take no interest in it, because they have taken care to make it their chief concern to secure wealth for themselves. Such men are utterly unworthy of being in the service of Him who declared that His kingdom was not of this world, who commanded His servants not to lay up treasures on earth but in heaven. Such men have no right to call themselves His ministers who require His servants to set their affections on things above and not to seek great things of earth for themselves. Instead of being proud of their ability to make money for themselves, they should rather seek to imitate the spirit of Him, who, though He was rich, yet for our sake became poor that we through His poverty might become rich spiritually, and to follow His example, who went about doing good and to devote their whole time and strength to the work of Christ as He requires of all His true servants in the Christian ministry.

ONE WHO KNOWS.

Christian Endeavor.

CHRIST, THE GREAT PHYSICIAN.

REV. W. S. MCTAVISH, B.D., ST. GEORGE.

(Missionary meeting suggested.)

Aug. 11.—Mark ii. 1-17.

Nothing could be more certain than that this world needs a physician. It is all diseased with sin. "The whole head is sick and the whole heart faint, from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises and putrifying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound, neither mollified with ointment" (Is. i. 5, 6). Those who have not been cured by Christ are diseased indeed. Asa was afflicted with a disease in his feet, but that type which afflicts the feet of sinners is much more dangerous, for "their feet are swift to shed blood" (Rom. iii. 15). The child of the Shunemite was probably sun-struck in the harvest field, for he cried "My head! my head!" But the head of sinners is altogether sick (Is. i. 5). Their throat is in a fearful condition, for the Word of God compares it to an open sepulchre (Rom. iii. 13). Their tongue is afflicted with an evil propensity, for with their tongue they have used deceit (Rom. iii. 13). Their lips are no better, for the poison of asps is under them. Their heart is in a deplorable state, for it is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; and, to make the matter still worse, it is difficult to bring them to a realization of its putridity (Jer. xvii. 9). If they were saluted in the words of Joab to Amasa, "Art thou in health, my brother?" they would have to answer in the negative.

But sad as is the condition of sinners, it is far from being hopeless. Job was once so incensed at the conduct of the three friends who came to help and comfort him, that he said, and we can fancy his lip was curled with scorn as he uttered the words, "Ye are all physicians of no value" (Job xiii. 4). But no disease ever baffles Christ. When He was here on earth some came to Him who had spent their all on physicians, and who, instead of improving under the treatment, were only made worse (Mark v. 26; Luke viii. 43); but the moment they stated their condition to Christ, He cured them of whatsoever disease they had.

"Thine arm, O Lord, in days of old,
Was strong to heal and save;
It triumphed o'er disease and death,
O'er darkness and the grave;
To Thee they went,—the blind, the dumb,
The palsied and the lame,
The leper with his tainted life,
The sick with fevered frame.
And lo! Thy touch brought life and health,
Gave speech and strength and sight;
And youth renewed and frenzy calmed
Owned Thee the Lord of Light."

As a physician, too, how kind he was! Many an anecdote is told illustrative of the kindness of Dr. John Abercrombie, but whatever was tender and generous in him was but the reflex of the gentleness and tenderness of Christ. No one was ever so sympathetic as Jesus. When others would have stoned, He was willing to speak the word of pardon (John viii. 10, 11).

As a Physician, He cures the whole man the understanding, the affections and the will. His touch has still its ancient power. He is still Jehovah Rophi—the Lord, the Physician (Ex. xv. 26).

Morison, in commenting upon this text, says that when Jesus went among the moral waifs, He went, not as a boon companion, but as a Physician. This is the philosophy in a nut-shell of all home and foreign missions. The text then suggests the thought that if we have been cured by the Great Physician ourselves, we should be willing to tell others of the remedy for sin.

Look not mournfully into the past; it comes not back again. Wisely improve the present; it is thine. Go forth to meet the shadowy future without fear, and with a manly heart.