

# The Presbyterian Record.

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## PAYMENT IN ADVANCE.

ARTICLES intended for insertion, must be sent to the Office of Publication by the tenth of the month at latest.

Remittances and correspondence of every kind should be addressed to "THE PRESBYTERIAN RECORD," Box 415, Post Office, Montreal.

The present is a very suitable time of the year to extend the circulation of the RECORD, and we specially urge ministers, office-bearers and missionary associations to use their best efforts in this direction. Every family connected with the Church should be supplied. As intimated in our last number, new subscribers for 1887 will receive the remaining numbers for this year free, provided orders are received before our supply is exhausted. Sample copies will be sent on application. Specimens of the covers employed by some of our leading congregations in issuing a *Local Supplement* will also be sent on application.

## Annual Report.

### THE STATE OF RELIGION.

THE General Assembly, in its care for all the churches from ocean to ocean, appoints an annual inquiry into the state of religion in every congregation, and in the surrounding community. The report on this most important subject is always heard with deep interest, for it answers such questions as these: How are the means of grace prized and appreciated? Is there progress in spiritual life? Are souls born again? Are men becoming more loyal to Christ and His church, and more liberal and enterprising in promoting the Redeemer's Kingdom? Last year's report announced increased attendance and high appreciation of the means of grace. This was substantially the view of a very large majority of Presbyteries, and well might the committee regard it as full of hope for the future. Still, it is well that the hint be noted with a view to further progress: "More grace and warmth in the minister, more prayer and d.

votion in the people." In the words of an influential Synod, why should not our services be so attractive that not saints only, but strangers and foreigners would be glad when it was said to them, "Let us go into the house of God." Increased attention to prayer meetings is indicated, a sign and a means of grace. More regular attendance upon the part of church members is insisted upon. As regards family worship, the most noteworthy item is the report of a congregation of 170 families in Prince Edward Island, all of whom observe this ordinance. Much neglect is reported from some Synods.

Is there sufficient attention paid to the Christian training of the young? Is there not a tendency to delegate the work of religious instruction to the Sabbath school teacher? Sabbath schools are receiving much attention and doing admirable work; yet it must not be forgotten that the chief and primary responsibility rests upon parents, and that instruction in the home can never be neglected without danger and guilt.

The report rightly insists on the duty of instructing our children in the distinctive principles of Presbyterianism, in order that they may be ready with a reason for their faith and practice in their church relationship. "The ideal Sabbath school is the whole congregation, met together for the study of the word of God and mutual edification."

The committee report growth in the grace of liberality,—an excellent sign of progress; but it seems that there "are Christians who have the heart to go to church from year's end to year's end, and never offer to contribute to any department of the church's work." "There is a sad streak of meanness about us somewhere; we want more means, and less meanness."

The additions to the membership of the church were encouragingly large. One congregation received 160 members at one communion.

The report speaks favorably of evangelistic and special services,—a fact deserving to be noted, especially where there is apparent deadness in the congregations.

We sorrowfully note that intercourse between the whites and the Indians, in the North-West, is condemned as "corrupting on both sides." The church is urged to take a still deeper interest in the spiritual welfare of the Indians.

Taken all in all, the returns of congregations, and the reports of Presbyteries, Synods, and Assembly, show that the church is making substantial progress; and the committee are justified in believing that the "Presbyterian Church in Canada is to gain for itself an honorable, a conspicuous, and extensive place in the all-embracing magnitude and applicability of the gospel of the Son of God, of whom it was said, in the far-off centuries, 'He shall have dominion, also, from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.'"