

Our Contributors.

SOME NOTES ON A GREAT CHURCH COURT.

BY KNOXONIAN.

The first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States met in Philadelphia in the year 1789. The opening sermon was preached by Dr. Witherspoon, and the Rev. John Rodgers, D.D., of New York, was elected Moderator. What Dr. Witherspoon and Dr. Rodgers might think about the Revised Confession or the Briggs case were they to visit the Detroit Assembly it would be hard to say, but they certainly would have to admit that Presbyterianism has made considerable progress in the United States during the past hundred and two years.

The General Assembly over which Dr. Rodgers presided represented four Synods, sixteen Presbyteries, 177 ministers, 219 congregations and about 9,000 members. The Assembly over which the venerable D. Green presides represents, according to last year's report, thirty Synods, 213 Presbyteries, 6,158 ministers, 6,894 churches, 775,903 members, and raised last year for all purposes \$14,368,131. Not so bad for slow Presbyterians.

There was a large attendance of members when the Moderator preached the opening sermon from John iii. 17. The full court numbers about 350. Most of them were there, and the church, which holds about 1,200, was well filled by the Assembly, Detroit Presbyterians and visitors from a distance. The sermon was a good Gospel sermon, but the effect was slightly marred by the difficulty of hearing the Moderator. He read closely, and it is not easy to make people hear at the extreme end of a large church and keep your eyes fixed on a manuscript at the same time. When the sermon was delivered the Assembly was constituted by prayer and adjourned. This Assembly opens by daylight and does one thing at a time. Worship this seditious and the election of Moderator and routine business at the next.

At three p.m. the court resumed, and after a little routine business, which was quickly despatched, proceeded to elect a Moderator. The people who expected a lively time and a close vote were woefully disappointed. Dr. Green, of Princeton, Dr. Dickey, of Philadelphia, and his neighbour, Dr. Baker, of the same city, had each strong support. When the right time came Dr. Dickey proposed Dr. Green. Dr. Baker seconded the motion, and Dr. Green was unanimously elected in about five minutes. If there were any ecclesiastical politicians present who dearly love a fight, they must have felt that the Pauline sentiment about preferring other people to one's self sadly interferes with elections. The whole proceeding was highly creditable to the parties chiefly concerned and to the great Church in which all three are distinguished ministers.

In the evening the sacrament of the Supper was dispensed to an immense congregation, who filled the body of the church and the galleries. For the first time in their lives many saw elders take the elements up to the gallery and serve tables there. Perhaps many saw it for the last time. Such a scene is not witnessed more than once or twice in a lifetime.

There are three distinct classes of men at the front in this Assembly. There is first the Grand Old Man class, represented by such members as the Moderator, Dr. Green, Dr. Smith, of Baltimore, and others. It is impossible to listen to one of these venerable men without being impressed. The moment any one of them rises the Assembly is all respect and attention. It is often said that the American people are lacking in reverence for old age. If any such ignoble irreverence exists, it does not extend to this Assembly.

Then there is another class that takes a prominent place in this great court. This class is composed of middle aged, highly-cultured, strong men, who do a large part of the work. A typical member of this class is always well dressed, wears a Prince Albert coat buttoned up, is a man of affairs as well as a preacher, goes on the platform in much the same way as he would walk into a parlour, and makes his speech or reads his report in a style that makes you absolutely certain he knows what he is about. This typical man often comes from New York or Philadelphia, Washington or Baltimore, or possibly from some place in the west to which he has gone to teach or preach. Dr. Roberts, the Clerk, Dr. Roberts, the chairman of the Revision Committee, Dr. Baker and Dr. Dickey, of Philadelphia, Dr. Bartlett, of Washington, and scores of others are good specimens of this class. They are strong men, ready men, resourceful men, men who know the world and are not afraid to face it. When you watch these men do business for two or three days you easily understand one of the reasons why this Church has so much influence in the United States. You also conclude that this splendidly dressed, influential looking brother does not live on the minimum salary.

Perhaps the most interesting class in some respects is the class made up of distinctly western men. Dr. George P. Hays, of Kansas City, is the typical man of this class. The distinctly western man has an easy freedom that draws a stranger to him at once. He is versatile and has enormous resources. Dealing with all kinds of characters, battling with all kinds of difficulties, enduring all kinds of hardships these experiences have made him master of almost any kind of a situation. He makes his speech at a great popular meeting or in the General Assembly with an airy freedom that at once captivates the audience. He makes points well and gener-

ally illustrates them with something that takes down the house. In this matter of taking down the house the western brother always takes the palm. The beauty of the operation is that he always does it without seeming to try.

One of the first things that strikes a stranger in this court is the despatch with which they put through routine business. There are twenty standing committees and thirty committees on Synod Records. Reading the replies for and against remits involves reading the names of 213 Presbyteries over a good many times. We venture to say that this Assembly can do all that in fifteen minutes.

The officials are not any better than the officials in the Canadian Assembly. There are six men doing the work that is done by Drs. Reid and Fraser, and that Dr. Reid did many a day alone. How does this Assembly get through routine work so quickly? Because the members don't spend the time needed for doing things in wrangling about how and when they ought to be done. Nor do they spend time in trying to reconstruct fifty or sixty committees that are well enough already.

But we must stop for this week.

OPENING OF THE NEW HOSPITAL FOR WOMEN AT INDORE.

On Tuesday afternoon, April 4, while the meeting of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society was in progress in the far away home land, a gathering more novel and not less interesting was held here in connection with the new hospital for women.

About five p.m. the native women began to gather in the waiting room of the hospital, and before the service began the large room and a small side room were crowded, and around the entrance door were many for whom a place could not be provided inside. Many ranks, castes and religions—Hindus, Mahomedans and Parsis—were represented. Wherever there is a gathering of Parsi women there is a sight to delight the eye. They wear the hair drawn tightly back from the forehead and bound in place with a handkerchief of purest white. Their faces are not disfigured by any marks, not by the nose-ring of Hindu and Mahomedan women. Their saris are of soft silk of most delicate colours, and their feet are encased in stockings of very pretty shades, and slippers with very high heels and very pointed toes.

Shortly after five o'clock a translation of the One Hundredth Psalm was sung, followed by the reading of part of Matthew v. and John vi. and invocation by Miss Oliver.

Mrs. Wilkie's opening address followed, in which she drew a striking contrast between the beginning of the Indore Medical Mission and the present. She spoke of the days when the first small dispensary was opened, when the natives regarded with more or less awe and suspicion such an innovation as a medical woman. And now the work has grown to such dimensions that the necessity for suitable buildings has long been felt, for not only from Indore city, but from cities and villages many miles away women come to be healed of their diseases. In closing, Mrs. Wilkie said she was sure that every woman present regretted that Miss Beatty's untiring labours for the past six years rendered it necessary for her to go home for the rest she has well earned. But they all knew Miss Oliver well enough to know that they could at all times look to her for help and sympathy of a practical sort.

After singing a Marathi hymn about the vanity of works of merit, Miss Beatty spoke to the women, telling them that we did not do this work hoping to lay up "puuya" (merit) for the life to come, because all we can do will never justify us in the sight of a holy God. But One has paid our debt to reconcile us to God—even Christ, the Redeemer, then Saviour and ours. And in seeking to minister to the needs of the body we do it in obedience to His command to "Love one another," and we desire above all that those who come to us sick in body may leave us rejoicing in spirit.

Short addresses were read by the daughter of Gampat Singh, of the Government Charitable Hospital, Kashibai, a Brahmin assistant, and the Christian women of our congregation, in all of which there were expressions of deep regret that Miss Beatty was forced to leave us for a time, and the hope that a rest at home would restore her to perfect health and to her work at Indore.

After singing another hymn the benediction was pronounced by Miss Beatty.

Then the women were shown through the building, and the proposed uses of the several rooms explained to them. In the centre of the building down stairs is the waiting-room. To the left are four wards, each having a bathroom, and a cooking place at the back and at the front, opening on the deep verandah which runs the whole length of the building. To the right of the waiting-room, and communicating with it, is the dispensary, beyond it are two wards and the operating room, arranged, as on the other side, for the comfort and convenience of the patients.

The ladies mean to live in the hospital, occupying the three upstairs rooms—a living room and a small bedroom on either side of it with a bathroom at the back. If the work grows, or if, for any reason, it is found to be undesirable that the ladies should live in the hospital, these up-stair rooms will be very useful as private wards, etc.

Patients will not be received into the hospital until July, as there is still some work to be done, and it is necessary

that the walls and floors be thoroughly dry before the place is occupied.

The building presents a fine appearance, with its deep verandahs, supported down stairs by arches a large small one alternating—and up-stairs by pillars. If the friends at home could see it they would feel repaid for any sacrifice they may have made in providing the money required for its erection.

We pray that many, many of our sisters for whom Christ died may find within its walls the light of life everlasting.

J. V. SINCLAIR.

Indore, C. I., April 23, 1894.

SYNOD OF MANITOBA AND THE N.W. TERRITORIES.

The afternoon previous to the meeting was spent by some twenty of the members in visiting the Indian Industrial School which was opened a fortnight ago. The party was accompanied by Rev. Dr. Sutherland, Secretary of Methodist Missions; Rev. H. T. Crossley, evangelist; and Rev. M. Harrison, of Regina. Mr. Hayter Reed, the Indian Commissioner, and Rev. A. J. McLeod, the principal, conducted the party through the large building which has been erected at a cost of \$40,000, and is intended to accommodate 200 pupils. The building is of brick on a stone foundation, is heated and ventilated by Smead-Dowd apparatus, and is well appointed in every respect. The school has opened experimentally with fifteen children, which number will be increased weekly. Farming and trades will be taught. After exploring the building from garret to cellar, the party gathered in the school room where one member of the Synod read a few words of Scripture and another offered prayer for the blessing of God upon the work of the new institution.

The Rev. D. Stalker, B.A., of Gladstone, opened the meeting of Synod in the evening with an appropriate sermon on "Be not weary in well doing, for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not."

The Rev. A. B. Baird, of Winnipeg, was chosen *Deo tempore* and called the roll.

Rev. Mr. Stalker thanked the Synod which he called the largest in the world territorially, for the support and encouragement he had received during his year of Moderatorship and asked for the appointment of his successor.

On motion of Rev. Dr. Robertson, the Rev. James Farquharson, L.A., of Pilot Mound, was appointed Moderator.

The thanks of the Synod were tendered to the retiring Moderator for his efficient service during the year, for a pastoral letter on religion in the family, and for his sermon in opening the Synod of which the mover said that he had rarely listened to a sermon with more profit.

The Synod met at ten o'clock on Wednesday morning, and spent the first hour in devotional services. The Rev. H. T. Crossley, J. E. Hunter, and J. K. Welsh, who were present, were asked to sit with the Synod as corresponding members. A memorial was presented by the Presbytery of Regina on behalf of the Rev. John Geddes, of Carlyle, asking to be placed on the list of beneficiaries of the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund. After discussion the application was referred to the Presbytery for additional information.

A request from the Calgary Presbytery for approbation of a plan that has been begun within its bounds for the establishment of a Chinese Mission within its bounds. This request was supported in vigorous speeches by the Rev. W. Gordon, Dr. King and A. McTavish.

The first item on the document for the afternoon was a statement on behalf of Manitoba College by the principal, Dr. King. In point of attendance the record was better by sixteen than any previous year, and the total number was 130. The theological department is well to the front with a graduating class of ten. The number in the art classes who are looking forward to theology number some fifty five or fifty. There is no change to be reported in the teaching staff, a fact which, the principal said, gave him much pleasure and to whose unstinting labour a great measure of the success of the college is due. The contributions from Eastern Canada for the support of the college amounts for the year to \$3,977 and there are some amounts still to be handed in. The Irish Presbyterian Church sends \$500, the Free Church of Scotland \$500, and the Church of Scotland \$250—\$1,250 in all from Churches on the other side of the Atlantic. Of old contributions given many years ago \$344 was paid during the year and \$1,200 was saved from ordinary revenue to apply to the debt. The total contributions for the payment of the debt amounted to \$4,143 and since the debt was only \$4,828, the sum of \$128 was left to the good. Over \$2,000 was paid in fees and \$938 in interest. The receipts altogether amounted to \$17,913. The steps taken to secure an intercollegiate system of training had been found economical and efficient. The science teachers of St. John's College, Wesley, and Manitoba had united to give lectures in a common room provided by the University. In addition to this, one mathematical student belonging to Manitoba College had received instruction in Wesley College, and three philosophical students from Wesley College had attended lectures in Manitoba College, an arrangement which had proved mutually advantageous. There is need of a larger number of scholarships, especially some for art students, and of a large amount of repairs in the building amounting to new heating apparatus to some \$5,000 or \$7,000. There is