

grace, and listening to all that others have to say, be yourselves, in the carrying out into action, as far as circumstances will allow, of whatever approves itself to your understanding and judgment, and be pure and good, that you may in general approve of what is right, and neither your minister nor any other man will have any just reason to complain.

### **Ecumenical Council of the Presbyterian Churches throughout the World.**

The Committee appointed at the meeting of Presbyterian Delegates to the Evangelical Alliance in New York, last October, addressed a circular early in this year to the various Synods and General Assemblies throughout the world, asking their opinion concerning the advisability of holding such a Council, and also asking them to appoint Committees to meet and arrange about organizing. So far as we have seen, the scheme has met with no opposition. The approval has indeed seemed to be pretty much *pro forma*, because the scheme is one that no one likes to oppose, but one, at the same time, that few care to grapple earnestly with. Unless a few representative men take the thing in hand, and give much time and thought to it, and unless they are backed by some men of wealth guaranteeing the expenses, it cannot take visible and effective shape.

In some respects, such a Council would be more useful than the Conferences of the Evangelical Alliance can possibly be. It would at once be seen how much more varied, and therefore more Catholic, Presbyterianism is than many generally suppose. The Dutch, the French, the German, the Waldensian Churches, would assert stoutly their Presbyterian order and doctrine, yet we would find combined in them the use of organs and hymns, and liturgies, the keeping of Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, and other solemn festivals, the rite of confirmation, and varieties of doctrine, all of which some people have been accustomed to consider "marks" of Episcopacy. Excellences that we would not dream of copying from Episcopalians, we might have no objection to adopt from Presbyterians, or if we

did not adopt them, we would cease to consider them marks of the Beast. Whether such a Council is or is not ever held, the idea of it is a grand one, and worthy of Dr. McCosh, the President of Princeton College, with whom it originated.

PRESBYTER.

### **Widows' and Orphans' Fund.**

There has been much talk about this fund, and a good many articles have been written about it, but on account of delays and delays and delays on the part of many Presbyteries and congregations there is no saying when the fund can be put in operation. At the Synod meeting in 1872, after the subject had been talked about for years, the first decided step was taken; that is, it was agreed to do nothing till a capital of \$8000 was raised, and it was resolved that this sum should be apportioned among the several Presbyteries. It was settled "that Halifax Presbytery should raise \$2,750, if St. John would undertake \$2000, Pictou \$1500, P. E. Island \$750, and Michichi and Restigouche \$500 each," and it was thought that this might be done in two years. Well, more than two years have passed, and what is the result? Only one Presbytery has come up to the mark. Halifax has paid in to the Treasurer \$2750, and will pay in \$500 more. St. John Presbytery has paid in \$500 from one congregation. Pictou Presbytery has paid in between \$500 and \$600 from two congregations. One congregation in P. E. Island has paid in \$36.75; and from the remaining two Presbyteries nothing has come in.

It is possible that the whole amount has been subscribed, but all that we can know or take action upon is the report of the Treasurer. Congregations may have invested on their own account what they have collected, but as the Treasurer is a Banker of well-known ability, and as he and the Committee has invested what has been sent in to them in securities yielding about 7 per cent., it would be surely more reasonable to remit all contributions directly to him. As it is, he has less than \$4000, whereas nothing can be done till the capital amounts to \$8000.

At last Synod the Committee was instructed to draw up rules for the future