

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN,
— PUBLISHED BY THE —
Presbyterian Printing and Publishing Company
(C. BLACKETT ROBINSON),
AT 5 JORDAN STREET, - TORONTO.

TERMS: \$2 per annum, in advance

ADVERTISING TERMS:—Under 3 months, 10 cents per line per insertion; 3 months, \$1 per line; 6 months, 1.50 per line; 1 year \$2.50. No advertisements charged for less than five lines. None other than unobjectionable advertisements taken.



TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 1887.

A MEETING of the Supreme Court of any Church—that is any Church whose Supreme Court has brains—generally puts some nuggets of wit and wisdom into circulation. Our friends across the line always furnish their full share of the nuggets and perhaps a trifle more. Here is a gem from one of the Home Mission speeches:

The rains having descended and the floods having come in a certain part of Colorado, a poor fellow crept into a hollow to escape the wet. The tree began swelling. The man could not get out. He pushed and struggled. At last he despaired and prepared for death. He reviewed his sins. He remembered then among other things that he had refused his wife missionary money. The more he thought about it the smaller he felt; the smaller he felt the smaller he began to grow—or shrink—till finally he became so small that he was able to crawl out of the hole. He never regained his size. And no man who presents the closed palm when the missionary plate comes around ever regains his former proportions.

Good! A man who always presents his "closed palm," finally becomes so small that he can creep out at any hole. It might improve the foregoing a little without interfering with the moral to say that the man with the "closed palm" crept out through a worm hole.

THERE is just one serious obstacle which prevents the union of the Northern and Southern Churches. The Standards declare that "Synods and councils are to handle or conclude nothing but that which is ecclesiastical, and are not to intermeddle with civil affairs which concern the commonwealth." Both Churches subscribe to this principle, but the old difficulty of applying the principle causes the trouble. During the war the Northern Church gave many semi political deliverances. The fact is every Presbyterian Supreme Court takes considerable liberty with the Standards in this matter. Whether they act wisely in so doing is another question. The deliverances of our own courts on the Scott Act go just about as far as any deliverances given by the Assembly of the Northern Church with the exception of the famous deliverance of 1861, on State rights. It is easy for outsiders to make suggestions, but it seems to us that the only way these Churches can unite in the present generation is to let the past go, unite on the Standards pure and simple, and then apply the principle in question to cases as they arise. Determining in advance exactly how any principle is to be applied to any possible case is always a difficult business. Settle the principle, and then use your grace and common sense in applying it as the cases arise.

THAT trenchant, racy and wide-awake writer in the *Interior*, who signs himself "Obadiah Oldschool" gives the following suggestive history of two ministers, probably two of "Obadiah's" classmates:

I have in my mind's eye two young men who left the seminary at the same time. They were not unequal in their gifts and culture. One determined to be a great preacher. His ultimate aim was to do good. But he thought it wise and right to secure popularity as a foundation on which to build usefulness. He was soon called to a large Church. He preaches there to crowded houses. He is one of our ablest defenders of the faith, and one of our most highly-honoured doctors of divinity. We all admire him and love him. But looking over the Minutes I see that he reports congregational expenses, \$24,000. Additions on profession, five. The other man started out to save souls, without any thought or care as to personal popularity. He is a home missionary in the far West. He reported last year congregational expenses, \$400. Added on examination, sixty. Who would not rather have this record in the great day than the other?

There is ample food for reflection in this little bit of Church history. The great day will no doubt make

many changes in the relative positions of ministers. Some unknown backwoods preacher who was little known among his fellow-men may stand nearer the throne when the Master comes than many whose names are often in the newspapers. The amount spent on stained-glass, cushioned seats and operatic music may not count for much in the final reckoning.

THE following well-worded, timely and much-needed resolution was presented to the General Assembly by Principal MacVicar, and adopted:

That the Assembly direct Presbyteries to adhere strictly to the provisions of the act of the General Assembly anent the reception of ministers from other Churches in dealing with all applicants, especially to avoid entering into engagements with such applicants, giving them ground for expectations that may be inconsistent with the fullest freedom on the part of the General Assembly in finally disposing of them; and further, that care be taken in every case to ascertain that the literary and theological training of the applicants is such as is required by the Church of our own : dents.

And further, if this "care be taken in every case" the list of applicants will dwindle until the duties of the Committee on the Reception of Ministers become very light. The learned Principal strikes the nail squarely on the head when he refers to the habit of making engagements with applicants before their cases are heard in the General Assembly. Too frequently the motive power in coming before the Assembly is the probability or possibility of a call to some particular congregation that the Presbytery or some member of it wants settled. With six theological halls, most of them crowded with students, why in the name of common sense should we take in ministers who cannot pass the primary examination of one of our colleges? The very climax of absurdity and of injustice to our own students is reached when we take in a man who has made a convenience of some other church to get into the Presbyterian pulpit.

REFERRING to the action of the Centennial Committee in proposing to endow the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund of the American Church to the extent of \$1,000,000, ex-Moderator Hays writes thus in an able review of the proceedings of the Omaha Assembly.

The General Assembly approve of the wish of that committee to concentrate its efforts on the raising of \$1,000,000 for the endowment of the Relief Fund. If the soldier deserves the consideration of the country he served, and for whose safety he risked his life, and the pension he receives is but the payment of a just debt, surely this work stands upon an equally honest platform in the presence of the Presbyterian Church. From no direction whatever has there been any antagonism manifested to this project. There was every assurance of the most hearty co-operation in every section of the Church. Already gifts are beginning to be reported. No better monument of thanksgiving could be made than the endowment of a fund for the support of thousands who have had the hard lots, and the obscure places, and the humble tasks in this hundred years of toil and triumph. No truer act of consecration for the future hundred years of work can be made than this act of assuring thousands who have to live on the small salaries, and do the hard and numbing work, that they should be cared for when they are no longer able to do the work. Young men do not hesitate to accept the struggles necessary to enter the ministry, or the difficulties that belong to the work of the ministry. They accept these without hesitation. The only hesitation comes in regard to what shall become of them when they are discharged from the army militant, and enrolled in the "army waiting" for translation. If the coming year can lift the sentiment of the Church to the right level on this question, it will be a year of agitation well expended, and the future work of the Church will show large results growing out of unselfish labour.

When shall we in Canada have a "year of agitation" for the purpose of making provision for the "army waiting" for translation. An agitation of this kind would make more for righteousness than some of the agitations we had last year.

THE WINNIPEG ASSEMBLY.

HOWEVER Quixotic it may have seemed to some that the General Assembly of the Canadian Church should this year meet in Winnipeg, there are possibly very few who remain unconvinced that it was a proper thing to assemble in the Manitoban capital, where an enlightened and tolerant Presbyterianism has taken deep root, and where, to all appearance, it is destined to grow to goodly proportions, and, in fraternal relation with other religious communions, is likely to aid in moulding the character and shaping the destinies of the western half of the Dominion. In general wherever Presbyterians are found they make good

citizens, and there is no reason for apprehension that they will prove otherwise in the great North-West.

It is now obvious that when the General Assembly was invited to Winnipeg the pastors and people meant what they said. In former meetings, from London to Halifax, the Assembly has always received a cordial welcome, and where the resources at the disposal of Presbyterian residents were limited sister denominations have cheerfully co-operated, and whatever else may have been wanting it has never been possible to complain of the lack of hospitality. It would, however, be a difficult matter to surpass the Winnipeg welcome. Each seemed to vie with the other in their efforts to make the visitors from a distance thoroughly at home in the Prairie City. The Premier and other members of the Government showed the utmost cordiality. Lieutenant-Governor Aikens gave a reception at Government House, the municipal authorities provided a pleasant drive, a reception in the beautiful City Hall, recently completed, and the fire department gave an exhibition of the efficient equipment the city possesses for extinguishing fires. The ladies of the respective Churches were unwearied in their exertions to provide for the comfort of the delegates. The authorities of Manitoba College gave a brilliant conversazione, and the generous outflow of hospitality was restrained only by the limited time at the disposal of the commissioners for much else beyond the duties they were elected to discharge. The Canadian Pacific Railway officials made generous arrangements to enable delegates to see the North-West, and a large number were able to avail themselves of the opportunity to gaze on the broad Pacific. Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney extended an invitation to visit the Indian reserves within reach of Regina, and the necessary facilities for transport were provided. If the Assembly delegates do not return home with well-defined ideas of the vast Canadian heritage in the North-West, it will not be for want of the ample opportunities afforded.

The meeting at Hamilton a year ago was remarkable for the degree of harmony that characterized the proceedings. In no respect did the meeting at Winnipeg fall behind its predecessor. There was, it is true, an absence of questions calculated to excite strongly-marked divergences of opinion at both Assemblies, but there was no absence of individual conviction and its expression. This in no degree interfered with the unity of purpose and spirit that pervaded the Assembly. So fine and so becoming a spirit will doubtless animate succeeding Assemblies, and cause adventurous spirits to hesitate before they risk breaking the record. It is, however, neither expected nor desired that full and earnest consideration of questions because they are difficult will be avoided for the mere purpose of preventing the rise of a breeze.

While there was general unanimity that next meeting should be held in Nova Scotia, on account of a tacit understanding that the brethren by the sea were entitled to it, because of use and wont, and because of repeated disappointments, several speeches from regions far apart voiced what is a growing feeling that it would be better to reduce the number of delegates, and to confine the meetings to a more limited and central area. At all events, such questions are emerging and will doubtless, after careful consideration, in due time assume a practical shape. The committee appointed to mature a plan presented their report, and the Presbyteries will certainly give it the attention it deserves.

The work of the Assembly was accomplished with commendable despatch, and without undue haste. The members have a clear grasp of the fact that they meet for necessary business, for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, not for irrelevant and lengthy speech-making. The audience is both generous and forbearing, but patience under the infliction of far-winged flights of oratory is clearly now a thing of the past. In justice to the late meeting it must be said that few, if any, attempted to transgress in this particular. The Moderator, as was anticipated, was a good mind reader of the court, and could always, with blended courtesy and firmness, prevent matters from dragging. There was not a solitary appeal from any of his decisions.

From the various interesting reports covering the work of the Church it is apparent the year has been one of encouraging progress. The Home Mission work has reached dimensions that urgently call for increased liberality. French Evangelization presented an excellent record. Foreign Missions have received a