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About Ourselves.

The multiplication of periodicals is one of the outstanding features of our time. The political press is found in every corner of the land. This is equally true of the papers devoted to trades' organizations, and to the professional and financial interests which form so important a factor in the intellectual and material forces of our country. Many people—not among the less worthy citizens of Canada—are strongly of the opinion that religious journalism should also be in evidence to a larger extent than it is, to the end that the "Righteousness which exalteth a nation" may more and more become the distinguishing characteristic of our fair Dominion.

Efforts were recently put forth to reduce the number of denominational papers published in Toronto, and with some measure of success. This was a commendable move, as four papers in the same interest in one city amounted to something akin to a scandal. There is room, however, for a Presbyterian paper with headquarters in Montreal—No journal in this important interest being published between Halifax and Toronto.

When it is borne in mind that the Synod of Montreal and Ottawa alone has over 27,000 families within its bounds, with a total membership of 58,000, it will be conceded that there is "room and verge enough" here for a paying subscription list.

But even these figures convey a very inadequate idea of the extensive field as yet unoccupied. From the last Blue Book it will be seen that there are 109,000 families in our Church. It is quite within the mark to say that Presbyterian papers already published do not reach more than 20,000 families; indeed, this is placing it at an outside figure. Surely the remaining 89,000 afford a fine constituency for a live, up-to-date distinctively Presbyterian newspaper, devoted to the highest interests of our church and country.

We present our readers then with the initial number of THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN. In view of the facts above stated, no apology for doing so is needed. Montreal, the Province of Quebec and Eastern Ontario, will be our immediate field; but while this is so, the interests of all sections of the country shall have careful attention. Special correspondents at important centres in the various Provinces will provide regularly for our readers a summary of noteworthy proceedings; and arrangements have already been made with many of the best writers of the church for a series of articles which shall minister to the intellectual enjoyment and help to deepen the spiritual life of those who peruse them.

The reader is asked to overlook the imperfections of this issue. It is proverbially difficult to get out the first number; and some delay in the printing office makes the issue several days later than was at first expected. This will account for the belated appearance of many news items. Of course, these difficulties are not likely to occur again, and with a complete list

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of exchanges, and correspondents writing on time, we expect hereafter to be quite up-to-date.

The Toronto budget went astray altogether, and hence we are without our letter from the Queen City.

The Beauty of Worship.

Worship and work are two sides of the same Christian life. In worship we seek rest and inspiration, in other words, renewal of spirituality, that we may not faint under life's burdens, or fail in its duties. The man who worships in a lowly spirit, receives strength to front the world, and face great tasks, and the man who works faithfully and achieves high character, is the man who, by the grace of God, is capable of rendering the purest worship. The true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ knows what it is to worship in loneliness and silence, for the soul of man is now the true Shekinah. But without going so far as those who say that a man who does not worship with the congregation does not worship at all, we are prepared to maintain that he who worships most truly in private appreciates most fully the communion of saints. Public worship is the reverent united approach to God of men and women who feel their need of forgiveness and blessing, but it is at the same time a drawing near to each other in spiritual fellowship. We believe that true fellowship with God through Christ makes possible the highest human fellowship. In the light of these great truths the subject of public worship should be considered. It is impossible to review in the course of one brief article the various statements and arguments given in these letters and lectures.* The movement with which Sir Sandford Fleming has identified himself concerns itself with the form of family and congregational worship, and those who ask that the Church should devote more care to the better ordering of our public worship believe that ritual forms are so closely related that they react and react on each other. In this demand Sir Sandford Fleming is supported by prominent ministers and laymen in the East and the West, and the Assembly has appointed a committee to consider the subject, with Dr. Laing as convener, that position now being held by the Rev. Prof. Ross, of Montreal. In this matter all admit that it is both safe and wise to hasten slowly, but the slowness and the steadiness of the movement is one pledge of its progress. Changes must be gradual and must carry with them the approval of those who take the most intelligent interest in the life of the Presbyterian Church. We have pleasure, then, in commending this pamphlet to the careful attention of all who are interested in the highest life of the Church. Sir Sandford Fleming claims to speak as a "pew-holder and humble member of the Presbyterian Church in Canada." But he is a man who has gained great distinction in other spheres, and it is a matter for gratitude that this question should be discussed by him from the hearer's point of view. In this collection of papers Mr. W. Mortimer Clark, Q.C., of Toronto, takes a similar position; from the ministerial standpoint the question is presented by the Rev. Dr. Pollok, of Halifax, Rev. T. F. Fotheringham, M.A., and others. So we are justified in saying that this important matter of the form of worship is here handled by men of more than average intelligence, who are intensely loyal to the Presbyterian Church and familiar with its history. We hope to have opportunity to say something of particular aspects of the subject, but can now only note the spirit and aims of the movement. The spirit is that of reverence for the sanctuary and its services. Mr. Gladstone once said, very wisely: "Reverence is essential, and where there is reverence I am not disposed to quarrel with my brother about ritual." Quarreling about small points of ritual is a small business, which narrows and warps the minds of men. From that we trust the Church will be delivered. But

*Worship in connection with the Presbyterian Church in Canada, being the letter of Sir Sandford Fleming, C.E., LL.D., K.C.M.G., to the Rev. Professor Ross, and related papers. The William Drysdale Co., Montreal.

surely it is a legitimate thing to strive for the improving of public worship, that the Church may have a simple, beautiful service in which all may take part, a service that shall have something of uniformity, and so bear the distinctive mark of our own Church, and yet where free utterance shall not be quite strangled by a dead weight of over elaborate forms. There may be formalism with the barest forms, and simplicity may degenerate into slovenliness. There is one point that all these writers insist upon, namely, that the use of liturgical forms is not un-Presbyterian. It is not merely this that the name Presbyterian refers simply to a form of government, to lay too much emphasis upon that would be merely to quibble; for there is a relationship between the form of government, the type of doctrine and the style of worship. But, as a matter of fact, the Presbyterian Church once had a liturgy. Knox and other reformers took part in revising the Book of Common Prayer, and the other reformed churches have a richer form of service than that which we now possess. This fact must stand in the forefront of the discussion, and at present all that is asked is discussion fair and patient, which views all the facts of the case and recognizes all the needs of the situation. Then will the Church learn to express her best life in the public services in forms that speak both to heart and intellect, which unite the most sacred associations of the past with the most fervent aspirations of the present, and realize fully the strength and beauty of the sanctuary.

Twentieth Century Funds.

All over the Christian world there are preparations for a great forward movement with the opening of the twentieth century. A spiritual quickening throughout the whole Church of God is longed for, prayed for and expected. It is felt, too, that with the incoming of the new century an earnest effort should be made to remove the financial embarrassments which at present are hindering the work of Christ in almost every department. To this end Twentieth Century Funds are looming up in connection with the various Protestant churches. The different branches of the Methodist Church on both sides of the Atlantic have taken up the idea, and already the raising of millions is under way. In the Scottish and English Presbyterian Churches the matter is under discussion. The Irish Presbyterian Assembly, at its last meeting, took hold of the idea with great vigor and enthusiasm. Two elders from country towns subscribed \$10,000 on the spot. The proposal is to raise half a million. The money raised is to be devoted to the strengthening of existing agencies of the church, and starting new ones for evangelizing Ireland. Among the special objects named are the erection of an Assembly Hall, provision for their aged and infirm ministers, and for the moral and physical training of the young.

In our own Church, a committee appointed by last Assembly, with Dr. Warden and Robert Murray at its head, has the matter in hand, and next June will present a matured scheme to the Church. Meantime, it is urged, that as far as possible, congregational debts should be wiped out, so that with the ushering in of the new century the Church may go forth "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

Many in Canada will be glad to read what the British Weekly has to say of Dr. Munro Gibson's new book "From Fact to Faith." Of these sermons it says: "He bases them not on texts of Scripture, which the sceptic might dispute, but on such indubitable facts of life as heredity, the struggle for existence, the law of sacrifice. His method he works in his own manly, frank and vigorous way, avoiding with singular success the extravagances into which those who handle such subjects are apt to run. These addresses are sensible, edifying and likely to do good."