

The Presbyterian Review.

ISSUED EVERY THURSDAY, from the office of the Publishers, Rooms No. 20, 21, 23, 25 Aberdeen Block, South-East corner Adelaide and Victoria Streets, Toronto.

TERMS, \$1.50 per annum.

All communications for either Business or Editorial Departments should be addressed PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW, Drawer 2464, Toronto, Ont.

ADVERTISING RATES.—Under 3 months, 15 cents per line per insertion; 3 months, \$1.00 per line; 6 months, \$1.75 per line 1 year, \$3.00. No advertisement charged at less than five lines. None others than unobjectionable advertisements taken.

Toronto, June 25, 1896.

Permanent Headquarters.

THE closing scenes at a General Assembly excite mingled feelings. The parting benediction leaves a tinge of sadness behind which lingers fitfully in the mind, for friendships made or renewed during Assembly are interrupted; the welcome guests have departed; the intercourse with the leading minds in the church has ceased and a feeling of regret prevails that the meetings with their debates and business have come to an end. On the other hand there are the pleasant memories, the inspiration derived from the addresses, the thankfulness for work undertaken or accomplished, for evidences of vitality, and of the fine spirit which animates the great men of the church in the conduct of her affairs. While these things add poignancy to the parting, the sorrow is relieved by the thought that the most of the leaders may meet again in Toronto in the near future, for events seem to point to that city as the permanent meeting place of the General Assembly, and headquarters for the church.

The high tone which pervaded the deliberations was marked, and the public verdict is unanimous that the high standard maintained throughout has never been surpassed by the General Assembly.

The ground taken with respect to the question of a permanent meeting place is at least significant and there is reason to believe is in accord with the growing opinion of the church. The time has evidently come when the advantages of Permanent Headquarters are clear to the majority of the membership. As an example *The Presbyterian Witness*, voicing opinion in the Maritime Provinces, may be quoted. Writing just as the Assembly was opening the Editor says:

"It is an open question as to whether or not the time has come for finding the true centre for our meetings of General Assembly. It is, and always will be, impossible to have the General Assembly meet in St. John's Newfoundland, Halifax, or St. John, New Brunswick, in the east and have a proper representation of the whole Church, and the equally impossible would it prove if the meetings were in Winnipeg, Vancouver or any other point of the far North West. The Assembly might itinerate in Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, London and Hamilton, with, in the course of time, other growing Ontario cities willing and able to take their turn as entertainers. Toronto is now, and will be for a good many years to come our natural denominational centre and headquarters. Would it not be a step in our onward march to make Toronto our Presbyterian Edinburgh? We put it in the way of a question because there is much room for variety of opinion on this matter, and we do not hold a brief for Toronto, or any other city. It must be borne in mind that the choosing a permanent place of meeting would bring to an end the entertainment of members except where such was the result of private friendship or voluntary hospitality."

Our contemporary thinks a permanent meeting place would involve the payment of the expenses of the delegates. Not necessarily; but should it be found advisable to do so it is shown that the charge would not be a heavy one. Centralization, consolidation and improved system, carefully developed would beyond doubt, be of the utmost benefit to the schemes and agencies of the Church; and it would seem that the day is not far distant when the great interests of the Church will be centred in Toronto and when the General Assembly will, as a rule, convene in that city.

Church Union.

One of the most important of the reports that came in on the closing day of the General Assembly was that dealing with Church Union. Rev. Principal Caven has been a hopeful and a faithful convener of the committee dealing with this subject, and his services will be appreciated by thoughtful students of the time, for his labours do not receive the serious encouragement, from all, that they deserve. It may be held that Protestant Union in Canada is impossible because impracticable. It may be held that it would not be desirable, but taking all differences of opinion into account, it must be conceded that the cause of Union has a wide basis upon which to rise in strength and vast proportion, and that the needs of the vineyard are pressing it forward. Take the case of Foreign and Home Missions; take the co-operation in matters pertaining to the body politic which the various churches now manifest; take the ever widening view of the work of the Church; and it must be conceded that time is on the side of Union. Rev. Dr. Caven's report is a hopeful one and is a distinct step onward.

An interesting fact is that Church Union holds a front place throughout christendom, among the Reform Churches. Here is the summing up of an argument from the *Contemporary Review*.

The New Testament gives no countenance to the idea that there may be many, denominations separate from and mutually exclusive of each other. The churches of Galatia had many places of worship, but they were otherwise one. Christ is the vine; His people are the branches; they have visible unity. Christ is the head of the body. "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of thee'" according to Paul. But it constantly does so in our age and land. Christ has one "Kingdom," not many. He has one "bride," not a harem. He has one flock in His various folds. The church is one "household," not many. It is a "Temple," with structural unity. It is a "Common-wealth," whose members are not "aliens" to each other, but "fellow-citizens." It is a "City" with twelve gates, but with common wall. It was our Lord's last prayer that His people might be one, even as He and God are one. That does not imply polytheism, or mutually exclusive existence.

Schisms began to develop in Corinth. But the first great division was between the Eastern and Western church. It followed the political division of the Roman Empire, and was due to the ambition of the Roman bishop. The next great separation came at the Reformation. It is not strange that, under the tyranny of despots and inquisitors, the centrifugal force was developed at the expense of the centripetal. Differences of race, language and temperament; differences of interpretation of Scripture; differences of political allegiance; personal ambition; partisan feeling; stubborn crankiness; vested rights; inherited prepossessions; the craze for uniformity at all costs; the lack of a knowledge broad enough to see the truth in protean forms; the lack of a charity that loves all Christians as Christ loved us; these and like