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## The Presbyterian Review.

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June 9, 1898.

### THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

THE General Assembly which opened last night at Montreal, meets under unusually happy auspices. Our correspondent elsewhere in this issue makes allusion to the remarkable enthusiasm which this meeting has evoked among the Presbyterians of Canada's commercial Capital. Comparisons should not be entered into, and certainly no town or city in Canada has yet shown an indifference to the honor of having the Assembly. Instead of that, towns have always vied with one another in the desire to extend a worthy hospitality to the visiting commissioners. Who can forget the welcome given by the loyal, true-hearted, openhanded Westerners at Winnipeg? Or the splendid receptions at Toronto, St. John, London, etc? No; the General Assembly is thrice welcome wherever it may decide upon holding its Sessions, and one of the obstacles in the way of meeting in Toronto yearly, as the headquarters of the church, is the reluctance on the part of other places to surrender to Toronto the pleasure of entertaining the commissioners, now enjoyed by these cities. Long may this sentiment remain strong. The General Assembly deserves well of the church, for not only is it the court of highest resort in our ecclesiastical system, but it is composed of fathers and brethren so devoted to the interests, and so fully in touch with the best thought of the church, that it would be difficult not to feel proud of it.

Of course the friends at Montreal will do their duty, and do it in the magnificent way so characteristic of them. And well they can afford to do it. Recently

we published an article showing the leading position occupied by members of the Presbyterian Church in Montreal. In the several vocations of life remarkable success has crowned them. The business of the country has been greatly controlled by them and many of its great prizes have naturally fallen into their hand. And how have they fulfilled their high trust? Let the hospitals, colleges, homes, charities and churches tell! We commend to the attention of the observant commissioners the object lesson furnished by many of the grand institutions of Montreal, which furnish proof of the fruits of Christian faith and Christian teaching. Much profound thought may be exercised on these examples of consecrated wealth, and the result will not be a weakening of faith in God's providence.

But Montreal has other attractive features for the members of Assembly. There are her grand men in the church, her leaders, clerical and lay. It will be a pleasant thing to come in contact with her ministers at their home, in their sphere of labor, and with her able professors. Let the visitors examine the problems these brethren have to solve.—City work with a mixed population and under conditions consequently of aggravated difficulty.

The French Canadian problem is still a live problem with the Church if not with the State. In Montreal it may be closely studied. The brethren there can give of their personal experience, a knowledge difficult to be otherwise gained. As in Toronto, Home or Foreign Mission work may naturally be in the ascendant, and in Winnipeg work in the Western section, so in Montreal one naturally looks for much interest in the work of French Evangelization, and additional light on that difficult and onerous task. We hope this question will bulk largely in the deliberations of the Assembly, and that, as one result of the meeting in Montreal, a quickening will be experienced throughout the entire Church with regard to the French department.

Never before had the Assembly a better opportunity to do good solid and needful work. There is an absence of questions that need prolonged discussion or bitter controversy. The condition of the Funds is satisfactory, and the spiritual state of the church can receive the prolonged attention it demands and deserves. True, the question is a difficult one—one that cannot well be disposed of by resolutions or deliverances, but surely the highest duty of the General Assembly must be to take cognizance of the life of the church, of the upbuilding of members and the extension at home of the Kingdom. Verily these are the questions of all questions, and the communion together of the fathers and the interchange of their experiences ought to make an impression on themselves and on the church at large to be felt for many a long day. General Assemblies remarkable for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, are greater than those distinguished for the dry bones of legislation. The absence of intricate business and the fairly comfort-