

THE

Home and Foreign Record

OF

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE LOWER PROVINCES.

JANUARY, 1875.

THE PAST YEAR.

Reader, the grand practical question for you is how you are to meet the record of the past year at the Judgment-seat of God. We are all travelling very swiftly to that Judgment-seat. It is near, it is near and fasteth greatly! Our years are few and precious; how have we used the past year?

How have I discharged my duties in my general relations as a member of a family, of a church, of civil society? How can I answer God when He takes account of the year in which I have used my opportunities, talents and advantages? Is the cause of Christ stronger, more flourishing, because of my efforts of mine? What sacrifices have I made to promote the religion of the world, to save souls, to diffuse the knowledge of the Redeemer?

The past we cannot recall. It is gone forever into God's own keeping. We can never profit by the past if we learn the lessons of wisdom, prudence and self-sacrifice from our failures and disasters. The past is gone, the future is not ours: the present is God's gift to us all. Let us use it wisely and well,—use it to advance our Master's Kingdom, and increase the happiness of all with whom we come in contact. Should we be spared to see the close of this year, we shall be able to review its progress with less of shame and regret.

PRESBYTERIANISM IN 1874.

The events of importance in the history of Presbyterianism have occurred during the past year. The British Parliament

abolished Lay Patronage in the Church of Scotland, thus removing an incubus which lay upon that body since 1711. The other Presbyterian bodies in Scotland have engaged in a movement whose aim is to disestablish and disendow the Established body. The Established Church numbers 1200 congregations and ministers; the non-established number 1400. The claim urged by the latter is that all should stand equal before the law.

In England another strenuous effort is being made to secure union between the United Presbyterian and the English bodies. The only serious obstacle is the withholding of its consent by the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland.

In France there has been a division between the orthodox and heterodox sections of the Church. Both are weak, in presence of the stupendous papal majority.

In the United States there was an effort towards union with the Cumberland, the Dutch Reformed and some other sections; but hitherto without much result.

The plan for the Federation of all Presbyterian churches throughout the world has made noticeable progress. A meeting of delegates was recently held in New York at which a general platform was adopted. It is hoped that arrangements will be matured in course of the present year for holding a general Council in 1876.

In our own country last year will be justly memorable for the success which crowned the negotiations for union, in Toronto, Montreal and New Glasgow.