

greater visibility to Presbyterian principles, which lie at the foundation of all freedom, and would enable the Presbyterian Church throughout the world, to take concerted action upon great moral questions, and thus exercise more of an influence for good among the nations of the earth.

HISTORY AND WORK OF THE ALLIANCE.

Five meetings have been held, the first in 1876, in Edinburgh, the second in 1880, in Philadelphia, the third in 1884, in Belfast, the fourth in 1888, in London, and the fifth in 1892, in Toronto, while the sixth is appointed for 1896, in Glasgow.

Four years ago the Alliance took a step forward, and appointed a permanent secretary, Rev. Dr. Matthews, a minister of our own Church. He has since resided in London, and devoted himself with untiring energy to his work, carrying on an extensive correspondence, visiting and encouraging the continental churches, many of them maintaining a brave struggle for the truth amid great difficulties and deep poverty, and bringing their needs more permanently before the larger and wealthier churches, and in every way possible, strengthening and forwarding the interests of the Alliance.

Since the London Council there has been for the first time, in the religious history of the European Continent, an ecclesiastical union between the two independent Churches, viz., "The Christian Reformed Church in Holland" and "The Reformed Churches" in the same country. These united in June 17th of the present year, taking the name of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands. A union is under consideration between "The (Dutch) Reformed Church in America" and "The (German) Reformed Church in the United States," and promises happy fulfilment.

The spirit of the Alliance and the benefits resulting therefrom are manifest also in foreign fields, both in the union of bodies which had been organized by different Presbyterian churches, and in the better distribution of the missionary forces in new fields. The Presbyterian Church in Brazil, formed Aug. 28, 1888, and "The United Church of Christ in Japan," formed Dec. 3rd, 1890, are the results of such unions.

At the recent council further recommendations were adopted with regard to Foreign Mission Work, such as uniformity in salaries of native agents in the same fields, and in the passing of members and workers from one mission to another, &c., which will no doubt prove helpful.

All these steps will tend to the formation of a strong united Presbyterianism out of the missions carried on by the different churches in new lands.

While there can't be, for a time, unity in Psalmody, as some of the churches will not sing hymns, yet it is probable that a result of the Alliance, will be a hymnal common to a large

part of English speaking Presbyterianism. At the last Council a meeting was held, composed of delegates from England, Scotland, the United States and Canada, to consult as to a common hymnal, and committees were appointed to see what can be done in that direction.

From the great size of its constituency, world wide, its infrequent meetings, four years apart, the outward manifestations of the spirit of unity which is within must be of slow growth, but they are sure, and there can be no doubt but that the influence of the Alliance is in coming days to be no mean factor among the human forces that shall help to banish sin and wrong from our world.

THE PRESENT MEETING.

Toronto, as was befitting a great Protestant, Presbyterian, Sabbath-keeping, Church-going city, put on her brightest smile, and gave her heartiest welcome to the representatives of the Presbyterian world who had gathered from all quarters and continents, and then shewed her hearty appreciation by a thronged attendance and eager attention. And well she might, for when keen strong minds had pondered long and deeply upon subjects of widest interest and had compressed the result of their thinking into papers twenty minutes long, and when, in the discussions, speeches were limited to five minutes, the bell mercilessly calling down all alike when their time was up, there could be no lack of interest.

Cooke's Church, where the business meetings were held, is large, new, and beautiful, its beauty consisting in chaste and elegant design rather than in costly material or elaborate ornament.

The first half hour of each session was spent in devotional exercises, which were sometimes very tender and touching. Hymns were excluded more rigidly than are the Chinese from America, for they were not admitted either on duty or in bond. Some few of the Alliance family do not like them, and in deference to their wishes the Psalms alone are sung. A selection from the parts more commonly used had been prepared for the meetings, and the hearty singing of them by the large and enthusiastic audiences showed well their richness and beauty, and the barrenness of the song service in which they have no place.

THE OPENING DAY.

On Wednesday, September 21st, Principal Cavan of Knox College, Toronto, preached in Knox Church the opening sermon from John 16: 13, "Howbeit when He the Spirit of truth is come He will guide you into all truth," etc. It is enough to say of the sermon that in ability and in spirit it was eminently befitting the occasion.

At its close the President, Rev. Dr. Blakie of Edinburgh, constituted the Council with prayer, after which came the roll call and the President's