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The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22nd, 1892.

THE Assembly did well when by a unanimous vote it decided to hold the next meeting in Brantford. Brantford is an enterprising, capable, plucky city, and will entertain the Supreme Court in good style. The only danger will arise from over entertainment. The Winnipeg people were so hospitable that the Assembly could scarcely get down to business, and the same difficulty may occur in Brantford. However, members of Assembly can stand a good deal of that kind of treatment.

USED to describe the weather, hot and cold are relative terms. On the afternoon of Monday, the 13th, when the mercury was up at 92 in the shade and the members of Assembly were sweltering in the heat, our excellent Foreign Missionary, Mr. Wilson, just returned from India, seemed to enjoy the weather immensely. "Pleasant afternoon," said Mr. Wilson to his friends in a manner that left no doubt he thought the weather about right. Next evening when everybody else rejoiced in the coolness, Mr. Wilson wore his overcoat. Seven years' residence in India changes a Canadian's opinion about the weather.

THE venerable Dr. Douglas has been pouring another broadside into Sir John Thompson. Manifestly the eloquent Doctor does not think that Methodism, turned into Roman Catholicism, possibly into Jesuitism, makes a good compound. The situation is made comic by the youthful Methodist who represents East Toronto in Parliament. He comes to the help of Sir John, gives him the highest testimonials, and gravely asserts that Dr. Douglas' references to the Redistribution Bill "suggest a very strong political bias." Of course *he*—the thick-and-thin, all-night and all-day supporter of Sir John Thompson—is entirely free from political bias. The spectacle of Emerson Coatsworth, jun., lecturing Dr. Douglas cannot be taken seriously.

NOBODY in the General Assembly or out of it, so far as we know, ever advocated the holding of summer sessions in Manitoba College or any other, because summer sessions are a good thing in themselves. The general opinion in the Church is that the movement is an experiment both in regard to the effect it may have upon theological education and upon Manitoba College in particular. Still it was an experiment that had to be made. There is some risk, but the risk had to be taken. Possibly there is less risk in the course pursued by the Assembly than there would have been in trying to supply the mission stations in any other way. Gathering up men in all parts of the country, men poorly equipped or not equipped at all, and pressing them into the service might soon lower the standard of the pulpit more than it can be lowered by summer

sessions. The system of licensing and ordaining men in advance, and allowing one or two sessions to be taken in the mission field instead of in College, is infinitely more dangerous than teaching in summer can possibly be. Of course the movement is a new departure, but it may have saved the taking of more serious departures.

THE formation of three new Presbyteries and a new Synod was about the best work done by the Assembly. British Columbia covers an area almost as large as the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario, but until last week the whole Pacific Province was one Presbytery, and the members had to travel fourteen or fifteen hundred miles to attend a meeting of Synod. Ministers labouring in what is now the Presbytery of Algoma had to travel three or four hundred miles to Presbytery meetings if they attended. Congregations three hundred miles from their Presbytery seat have all the disadvantages of the Presbyterian form of Church government without any of the advantages. The objection that a small Presbytery is sometimes a very unsatisfactory court for judicial business has some force. It is seldom well to put much power into the hands of a few men, however good the men may be. But these Presbyteries may not stay small in numbers for any considerable time, and judicial business is but a small part of the work of the Church. The right of appeal is so freely used in the Presbyterian Church that local influence if wrong can easily be overcome by a higher court.

QUEEN'S COLLEGE stands in the very place which the Church selected for the venerable institution. The relation of the University and the Theological Hall is the relation formed by the Church. The legislation sought and obtained in '74 defining the relation of the institution to the Church was sought and obtained by the Church. In '85 the authorities of the College asked for additional legislation in the line of that obtained in '74. The Church granted permission. In '89 the additional legislation was obtained in the full light of day. In fact the light was fierce as well as full, for the old question of Provincial rights came up when the Bill was before Parliament. In June, '89, the General Assembly approved and endorsed the new legislation sought and obtained by its consent. Every step taken by the institution has been taken with the consent and approval of the Church. Now we submit that it is not British fair play, to say nothing of Christian principle, to put the College in a certain place and then kick it because it is there. How would a man like to have his relations fixed and his duties assigned by the Church, and then have an agitation raised to stop his little salary because he was in the place the Church put him?

A VISITOR to Montreal at the present time, we mean a visitor who reads the newspapers, is strongly tempted to think that if the people are enterprising and capable, the kind of Government they have is not of much account. For some months past, outsiders have been told that a revolution was in progress in Quebec. The Province had a "crisis" or something of that kind. When you visit the city you find that Montreal is more magnificent than ever. If there was a "crisis," it certainly did not affect the appearance of the commercial capital of the Dominion. Splendid mansions still adorn the mountain, handsome carriages still roll along Sherbrooke Street, and brown stone blocks seven or eight storeys high persist in going up on Great St. James Street. Vessels flying every kind of flag float in the harbour, and the Protestant churches never were as numerous or as well equipped. It would be wrong to say that it makes no difference how a country is governed. It is true, however, that a spirited, enterprising, capable people can get on in spite of bad government. Even the government of a Mercier cannot keep back a city like Montreal. The prosperity of a country is no proof that its government is either good or bad.

THE action of the Assembly in receiving and adopting by a very large majority the report of Queen's College, implies a distinct and emphatic disapproval of the practice, unfortunately too common, of discussing Church affairs in the newspapers before seeking redress for wrongs, real or imaginary, in the way prescribed by the Church. As a court of final resort the press may be legitimate, but it should not be used as a court of first resort. Trial by newspaper may be proper when justice is denied by trial before the constituted authorities. A man smarting

under a sense of wrong, or refused substantial justice by the use of technicalities in a civil or ecclesiastical court, is justified in appealing through the press to the larger tribunal of public opinion. That, however, is an entirely different thing from creating a volume of public opinion in favour of your case by writing in the newspapers and then bringing your case into court. Many a congregation has been injured by having its affairs paraded in the newspapers, and the practice that injures congregations cannot be good for a college or for the Church as a whole. Even the members of Assembly who voted against receiving the report might not like to have all the affairs of their own congregations discussed in three or four daily newspapers. There is a right and a wrong way of doing everything.

ONE of the most pleasant features of the Assembly was the visit and address of the Rev. Dr. Gray, ex-Moderator of the Church of Scotland. The Doctor is one of the grand old men that seem to abound on the other side of the water, and his appearance indicated that old men are well cared for in the old land. His speech was a model—just dignified enough for an ex-Moderator of the Kirk and popular enough to please almost everybody. An occasional gem gave point and increased lustre to an address, bright, cheery and hopeful in all its parts. Referring to the large number of Scotchmen coming to Canada and to the aid given by the Kirk to our Home Mission Fund, the venerable Doctor said: "These are our children, and we are not going to lay them down on your door-step, ring the bell, and leave you to care for them. We will send you some help." The slow progress made towards Union of the Presbyterian bodies in Scotland was humorously explained by saying that the Kirk is on trial, and a man on trial is never matrimonially inclined. The most hearty cheer of the meeting was given when the venerable divine closed his delightful address, shook hands with the Moderator and bowed himself out in a style that tempted one to say "Scotland yet."

THE WORK OF THE ASSEMBLY.

FOR the past few years the time of the General Assembly has been fully taken up with the transaction of the regular business that must come before it. In order to accomplish that, many restrictions have to be imposed. Lengthy speeches, except on matters of great importance, are no longer tolerated. Especially towards the close, even the most influential members of the court have to study brevity. In regard to many matters occupying the attention of members, this is a decided advantage. It cuts off all redundancy and prevents needless repetitions, and there is little doubt that when the commissioners follow closely the order of business the decisions reached are in the main satisfactory. Were more time spent on routine matters, it is almost certain that the questions would be clouded and complicated with side issues, rendering a clear decision more difficult than when speakers are compelled by the spirit of the Assembly to adhere strictly to their text.

It is clear, however, that too much work is crowded into the few days at the disposal of the Assembly. Again and again it was urged against the introduction of certain subjects that as they involved the consideration of new matter, the regular business of the Assembly must have precedence. In the circumstances this could not well be objected to, but at the same time the impression was left that questions of great interest to large numbers throughout the Church had not received the attention they might have otherwise received. The importance of the relation of young people's societies to the Church is generally recognized, and the discussion of that subject in the Assembly would have been useful in ascertaining the general sentiment of the Church. As it is, probably no time has been lost by the course adopted by the Church in relation to this question. Its careful consideration by the committee appointed to deal with it and report to next Assembly, may ultimately save valuable time, obviate prolonged discussion and present a matured opinion to the meeting at Brantford. It may be found that there is not such material difference of opinion throughout the Church on this question as some suppose. There are certain points on which all are agreed. It is a good and a hopeful sign of the times to see so generally diffused a desire among the young people to take an active part in Christian work. It is admitted that by engaging in such activity, they will receive great benefit and be enabled to render valuable services to the respective