

The Presbyterian;

A MISSIONARY AND RELIGIOUS RECORD

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA IN CONNECTION WITH THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

CONDUCTED BY A COMMITTEE OF THE LAY ASSOCIATION OF MONTREAL.

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The Presbyterian.

THE CHURCH IN CANADA.

LAY ASSOCIATION.

The Annual Meeting of this Association was held on the evening of Tuesday, the 3rd October, in the Vestry of St. Paul's Church.

The Honble. PETER M'GILL, President of the Association, was in the Chair, and the meeting was attended by a number of members, but not by so many as on former occasions, and by several persons from a distance.

The Rev. Dr. MATHIESON opened the meeting with Prayer.

The Recording Secretary handed in the Annual Report, which was read.

ANNUAL REPORT, 1848.

The proceedings of the Lay Association of Montreal during the past year having been from time to time made public through the columns of the "Presbyterian," and those matters of more peculiar interest having been alluded to in the Quarterly Reports, also circulated through the same medium, the Board of Managers consider it unnecessary in this, their Annual Report, to enter so much into detail as on similar occasions in previous years.

Since the Board last met the Association—at the Quarterly Meeting in July—the Synod of our Church held their Annual Assembly in this city. In accordance with your instructions, given on the occasion referred to, a Deputation of your Office-bearers personally presented an Address of welcome to the Reverend Court, in which, at the same time, the aim and objects of the Association were again brought before the Synod. The Address was ably and warmly responded to by the estimable clergyman filling the chair of Moderator, and the several matters, therein alluded to, engaged the attention of the Synod, at a subsequent meeting, when an expression of cordial approval of the Association's objects and proceedings was recorded.

In their last Quarterly Report the Board brought

under your notice the subject of so far modifying the Constitution of the Association as to admit the applications of the Funds towards the encouragement of young men studying for the Ministry. The time that has since elapsed has still further confirmed your Board in the opinion, then expressed, that the efforts of the Association should be directed rather to objects which will advance the general interests of our Church than to the relief of particular Congregations throughout the Province. Indeed, should the forthcoming year, like those that have passed, show a continued drain on our resources for the pecuniary relief of Congregations at a distance without a single contribution thereto from any similar quarter, it will become matter of serious consideration whether the operations of the Association should not be circumscribed within narrower limits than its plans have hitherto contemplated. Should the Association consider it advisable to hold out encouragement to students of Divinity by the establishment of bursaries or otherwise, it will be in the power of the present meeting to effect that object by making the requisite alteration in the Constitution.

It is with gratification that the Board have to announce the continued success of the periodical established by the Association in January last, under the name of the "Presbyterian." During the three months that have elapsed since our last General Meeting; its circulation has experienced a steady increase and there is every reason to believe that the deficiency in the receipts on its account, as compared with the disbursements, will be considerably less than was anticipated on its establishment.

It is also very satisfactory to your Board to acknowledge the greater interest taken in the "Presbyterian," as evinced by the number of contributions to its columns received of late from members of our Church not resident in Montreal. It is earnestly to be desired that the increase of such contributors should be still more rapid, as the interest excited by a periodical like that now in question depends almost in as great measure on the variety of contributors as of subjects.

The Treasurer's Report, herewith submitted, will exhibit the state of our Funds. The balance deposited in the Provident and Savings Bank at the time of its suspension of payment has nearly all been secured by the transfer of a mortgage; but, as this amount cannot be realised before the expiration of six months, the Board has been unable altogether to fulfil the engagements previously made by the Association for the relief of Congregations. The subscriptions now due will be applied to that purpose as collected, and

in the interim the only new grant made by the Board has been the sum of Ten Pounds to aid the Congregation of Camden East in paying off the debt on their Church.

The Report of the Treasurer was then read.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

The amount at the credit of Donation accounts "Relief Fund" and "Publication Fund" respectively remains, as before, £228 and £50. These are invested in City Bank Stock, which cost £275 15s. No dividend was received at the usual half-yearly period in June.

The Collections for the past year have been very irregularly taken up, and only a small portion of them has been handed to me. I understand, however, that they are now in course of collection, and it will be seen from the following statement that it is necessary that a large amount should speedily be realised.

The total amount at the credit of the two Funds is—
Relief - - - - - £101 6 10
Publication - - - - - £37 17 5

but the latter sum only is in the meantime available, as, from the circumstance of the Provident Bank no being in a condition to pay, I deemed it prudent to take from it the transference of a mortgage with undoubted personal security. Until the mortgage is paid off, which will not be sooner than six months hence (and may be later if the mortgage is adopted as a permanent investment), there will be no means at the disposal of the Association for the purposes of the Relief Fund, unless the Collections for the past year be vigorously proceeded with. The Provident Bank have retained in their hands the sum of £10 15s 2d to meet any loss which may occur in winding up that Institution.

The small sum at the credit of the Publication Scheme will, in all probability, be required to meet any deficiency that may occur in the payment of the Association's Monthly Journal—"The Presbyterian." This, it may be recollected, I anticipated in my last Annual Report. If some of our friends at a distance would both be more prompt in remitting for the Presbyterian, and also in endeavouring to extend its circulation, I see no reason why in another year it should not support itself without deriving any aid from the Association. When twelve monthly numbers shall have been issued, I will submit the accounts to the Association.

The following is a short Statement of the Assets of the Association as at this date: