

Presbyterian Record

VOL. XXV.

JULY, 1900.

No. 7.

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LETTERS FROM ASSEMBLY.

Halifax, June 13, 1900.

Dear Record,—

I promised to write you something about the General Assembly, which began its sessions this evening in this dear old city by the sea, with its cool breezes and warm hearts.

Very pleasant was the roundabout journey hither, with brief halts at Sydney, the Maritime Mecca, and at Milford and New Glasgow, the scenes of former happy pastorates with their precious memories and true and tender friendships; and very pleasant the arrival, meeting and greeting "fathers and brethren," and revisiting the haunts and homes and friends of college days, I will not say how long ago. If earth's reunions be so pleasant, what will be the "meeting again!"

This evening the work of the Assembly began, according to good old Presbyterian use and wont, with a sermon by the retiring Moderator, Rev. Dr. Campbell, of Perth. His text was a verse of that old faith song of the Psalmist, "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved," a truth as real and precious to our land and time as to Israel in the long ago. He spoke of ways in which God's goodness had been bestowed on our land, in preparing it for its coming millions, by making it one of such great and varied richness, with its boundless treasures of forest and plain, of mountain, stream and sea, and then—in giving the moulding and shaping of it, in its earlier stages, so largely into the hands of men who carried with

them into their forest homes their Bible and school and Church, and laid deep the foundations of this new land in truth and righteousness, preparing it to receive and assimilate the mixed peoples now thronging to our shores.

In many other ways he showed God's hand in our history, and the responsibility that rests upon us to hand down to others unimpaired the heritage we have received.

In addition to the older problems we have throngs from Central and Northern Europe, and the Mormon octopus with a tentacle on the North-West. It is no time for idleness.

There is a thought suggested by it for your readers to ponder, viz.—God was to the psalmist and to Israel not only the God of the individual and of the Church, but of the nation. Does religion to-day take sufficient account of our relation to God as a nation? Is not duty to Him and dependence upon Him as binding along the lines of national life as of individual and church life?

The opening service ended, the next few minutes present a picture the same from year to year yet always attended with interest deep, intense. The Moderator, robed in gown and dignity, descends from the pulpit and takes his place on a platform in front, the two clerks of Assembly with similar dignity taking their places at a table on his left. In fitting tones and language he addresses the Assembly, perhaps reviewing his reign, thanks them for the honor done him (albeit a different Assembly did it), and tells them that the time has now come to elect his successor.