

Meeting of the General Assembly's Sabbath School Committee.

The General Assembly's Sabbath School Committee met in Central Church, Toronto, on April 6th. The committee appointed to investigate the charge that the receipts from last Children's Day had not been applied as directed by the Assembly reported that in their opinion the Convener was justified in deducting from the gross amount the actual cost of issuing the programmes. Their finding will appear in full in the report to Assembly. It was adopted unanimously by the committee. The committee in charge of a preparation of a Young Children's Catechism reported progress and promised to have a complete draft ready by the meeting of Assembly. The Convener presented the financial statements as they will appear in the report to Assembly. The guaranteed liability has been discharged, and the deficit on current expenses is only \$22. The receipts from Children's Day and other donations were \$4,193.46, as compared with \$3,698.43 last year, an increase of nearly \$500. A long discussion took place in regard to Higher Religious Instruction. In attempting to comply with the recommendation of Assembly to make the scheme self-supporting the course was made to extend over three years, and other modifications were introduced. The experience of this year has convinced the committee that any attempt to comply with the recommendation referred to will not succeed. The scheme must be supported by the voluntary contributions of those who approve of it. The Children's Day contributions were originally solicited chiefly for this work and were liberal beyond its requirements before any Lesson Helps were published. It was therefore resolved to recommend to the Assembly that the expenses of the scheme be made a first charge upon the receipts from Children's Day. The total amount required does not exceed \$400 or \$500. It was also resolved, in view of misunderstandings, that medals, prizes, and diplomas be issued for the examination last January on the same basis as heretofore. It was recommended that in future the giving of medals be discontinued.

The contract for the publication of class and school registers having expired, a committee was appointed to revise the forms and report to the meeting in June with a view of issuing a revised set next summer.

A committee was appointed to prepare a programme for next Children's Day. The Convener then announced, in the following terms, his intention of retiring from the committee:

"I shall respectfully request the General Assembly to permit me to retire from the Conventionship for the following reasons:

"1. The Assembly has taken out of the control of the committee a very important part of the work committed to its oversight, namely, the publication of the Lesson Helps. This it has done without assigning any reason and in the face of the earnest remonstrance of the committee. I cannot but agree with the view expressed by the committee in the 'Addendum' to its report last year, and regard this action as a reflection upon the competency of the committee to manage its own affairs, and must decline to continue to preside over it. I should have taken this course two years ago had I not felt in duty bound to remain at my post until all the deficit was paid. I am now at liberty to follow the dictates of honor and self-respect.

"2. In appointing a special committee to superintend the publication of the Lesson Helps the Assembly has acted unconstitutionally. Presbyteries, in reporting on the remits sent down to them in 1896, vetoed, by a large majority, the proposal to appoint a Board of Sabbath School Publication. The committee referred to is such a Board and its existence is a contravention of the Barrier Act.

"3. I have been informed, on authority which I must accept, that I am personally unacceptable to some in the Assembly, and that much of the opposition to the work of the committee arises from the fact that I have the honor of directing it. This revelation comes to me as a very unpleasant surprise. Judging from the exceedingly flattering resolutions of appreciation annually passed when the committee's report was presented, I should never have suspected the existence of such a feeling. I am entirely unable to charge myself with having given any just cause for it. But seeing that it exists, and is able in some degree to express itself in the decisions of the Assembly, regard for the interests of the S. S. work, as well as other obvious reasons, require that I shall give place to some one who shall be fortunate enough to possess the good-will of the brethren."

The committee then adjourned to meet in Central Church, Hamilton, on the second Thursday of June at 9 o'clock a.m.

What About the Entire Psalter?

Editor Dominion Presbyterian:—

Sir: When what is called "The Presbyterian Book of Praise" came out, we were most distinctly told that the whole Psalter also would be issued by the General Assembly for use in the service of praise in our Church. We were not to be limited to a kind of "Ross Psalter," as it may be termed. We are a good deal older to-day than we were then. But as regards the promise just stated, we now—to express it in Hibernian language—hear nothing but perfect silence.

A goodly number in the Presbyterian

Church in Canada would like to know when that promise is to be fulfilled. They belong to those of the I. O. O. F. (Independent Order of Old Fogies), who believe that the whole Psalter was given to the Church to be used by her in her praises "till He come." I am not ashamed to say that I am one of them. True, the whole Psalter is not under the ban of the General Assembly, but it has not the "approval and commendation" of that body as what is called "The Presbyterian Book of Praise" has. See the title page of the latter.

When is the entire Psalter to be "approved and commended" by the General Assembly as "A Presbyterian Book of Praise?" is therefore a question to which we would like very well to hear an answer.

T. FENWICK.

Woodbridge, Ont.

A Good Suggestion.

Editor Dominion Presbyterian:—

Dear Sir: In view of the fact that in several cities teaching elders have formed themselves into ministerial associations, and have been a marked success, I venture to suggest the establishment of similar organizations for the benefit of ruling elders. It has long seemed to me it would be an immense advantage in carrying on the responsible work of oversight, if, at stated periods—say once a month—the ruling elders in a city or district met together for prayer, an exchange of views, consultation and encouragement. Besides, by some such method, we would be more in touch with each other and would receive valuable hints of which many of us are now ignorant. As it is, each congregation has procedure confined to itself, whereas, by coming together, plans could be discussed and, in many cases, adopted to our mutual advantage.

There need be no elaborate constitution or binding rules, but simply the election of a President and Secretary, the former holding office for three months and the latter for a year, while the meetings could be held once a month in the respective vestries in turn.

I give the idea for what it is worth. Perhaps some of my brethren will favor us with their views through the columns of your valuable paper. Yours truly,
An Elder.

Ottawa, 23rd April, 1899.

Life is a building. It rises slowly, day by day, through the years. Every new lesson we learn lays a block on the edifice which is rising silently within us. Every experience, every touch of another life on ours, every influence that impresses us, every book we read, every conversation we have, every act of our commonest days, adds something to the invisible building.—J. R. Miller.