

The Presbyterian Review.

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Toronto, March 26, 1896.

The Vacant Professorships.

THE nominations by Presbyteries for the vacant professorships having been made, interest now centres on the selection which may be made by the College Board. The choice of the Board while by no means final will have great weight with the General Assembly, hence the great care and caution which will be observed in reaching a decision.

The list sent up for consideration is a fairly good one, containing as it does the names of many able scholars adapted for the duties of the professorial office. Moreover, the Board is not confined in its choice to the list of nominees sent by the Presbyteries, but may select others, a fact not without its advantages, for the Board is most intimately aware of the special needs of the College and the kind of men which will bring the greatest strength with them to the teaching faculty.

It has been urged often, and sometimes with what has appeared to be greater zeal than wisdom, that ministers in active connection with the Church in Canada ought to be appointed. There is much to be said for this view, and the essential qualifications being equal, it ought, probably, to prevail. Yet it would be a decided weakness were the Church fettered by a prejudice against men from other branches of the Presbyterian body. On the one hand it is fairly contended that a born Canadian can understand and appreciate the conditions and needs of the Canadian Church, better than a Briton or an American, while on the other hand, it is as truly held that the scholarly and personal qualities, so necessary in a professor, may not be as easily available in Canada as in a wider field.

The case of Dr. McCosh's appointment first to Belfast and then to Princeton is cited to emphasize the latter view. Such examples, however, are quite unnecessary. The duty of the Church is clear. It is to appoint the very best men available be they from Great Britain Canada or the United States. The appointments are of the greatest importance; indeed their importance is not likely to be over-estimated even by those who adhere to the highest standard of qualifications, and that being so, men in every way suitable and competent must be sought for and found for the positions. There is every reason to suppose that it is in this spirit the Presbyteries and the Board have been proceeding.

The number of nominees indicates that there are in the Church not a few who are considered by their brethren competent for the positions. Should these be passed over in favor of others from without the Canadian Church, there should be rejoicing not disappointment, for the General Assembly will act for the best and the Church will be further strengthened by the addition of able men of whom there cannot be too many in her service. Should Canadians be appointed the

Church will be congratulated on the fact that she will have found within her own pale men the peers of any in other lands who might have been chosen to devote themselves to the Master's work in Knox College. With the highest interest of the Church steadfastly kept in view there ought to be but little difficulty in making the appointments and no heart-burning as a result.

Home Missions.

The Home Mission Committee met this week under circumstances which may be characterized as satisfactory and encouraging. The work carried on in the old Presbyteries as reported upon is of itself an evidence of the importance of the duties with which the Committee is entrusted, and it is no small praise to say that under the careful supervision of the Committee the past year has been a prosperous one. A detailed statement will appear in our issue of next week which will enable our readers to realize the full significance of the work, and it is to be hoped it will be carefully and prayerfully perused, for it is by such means a grasp of the affairs of the church can best be obtained.

Meanwhile it is gratifying to note that the contributions to the funds from the old country amount to \$6106.27, while for a special object, the Students' Missionary Society of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland has promised a handsome sum. The Treasurer's statement showed a revenue of \$55 076 14. Expenditure to date, \$36.508 22; leaving a balance of \$18,567.92; to which add balance on hand, May 1895, \$655.36: total balance on hand, March 23, 1896, \$19,223.28 and the Committee estimates that a further sum of \$15,000 will be necessary to carry out the indebtedness of the current year.

The loss to the Committee by the deaths of Rev. Dr. Reid and D. J. Macdonnell, was very properly acknowledged, for the services of both, were of inestimable value.

Public Worship.

The importance of the public services of the church is a theme which has engaged the timely attention of several thoughtful writers of late. At a recent meeting in Glasgow, Rev. Professor Story, dealing with a large scheme of church extension, emphasized the duty of attending church, which rested upon all. "When people talk," he says, "of the great object of going to church being the delivery of sermons, I wish they would rise to a higher consideration of what Christian worship is. The idea of the Church being the vehicle of the worship and the prayers of the people of God, is far too much lost sight of." "The development of a healthier idea of worship amongst us will do more than anything else, more than direct preaching on the subject of worship, to train up a spirit of reverence, a spirit of conscious dependence upon God, a spirit recognising God's presence in and God's power over our daily work, a recognition of Him in all our ways, which should go far to check and keep back the advancing tide of the materialistic secularism and the scepticism of our day." "The withdrawal of oneself from the community of the Christian congregation and from the public worship of God, is sure to have a deadening and secularising effect upon the mind and conscience. To lapse from Christian ordinances always implies a deterioration of the whole theory and idea of life, and the growth, in the person who lapses, of an idea of life in which religion has no place. Religion, which binds us to the Supreme and to the Unseen, ceases not only to be a controlling influ-