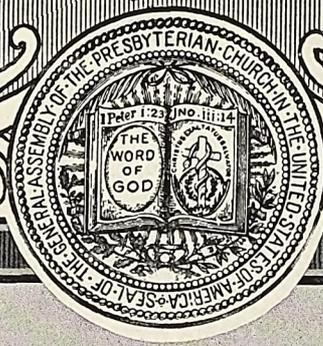


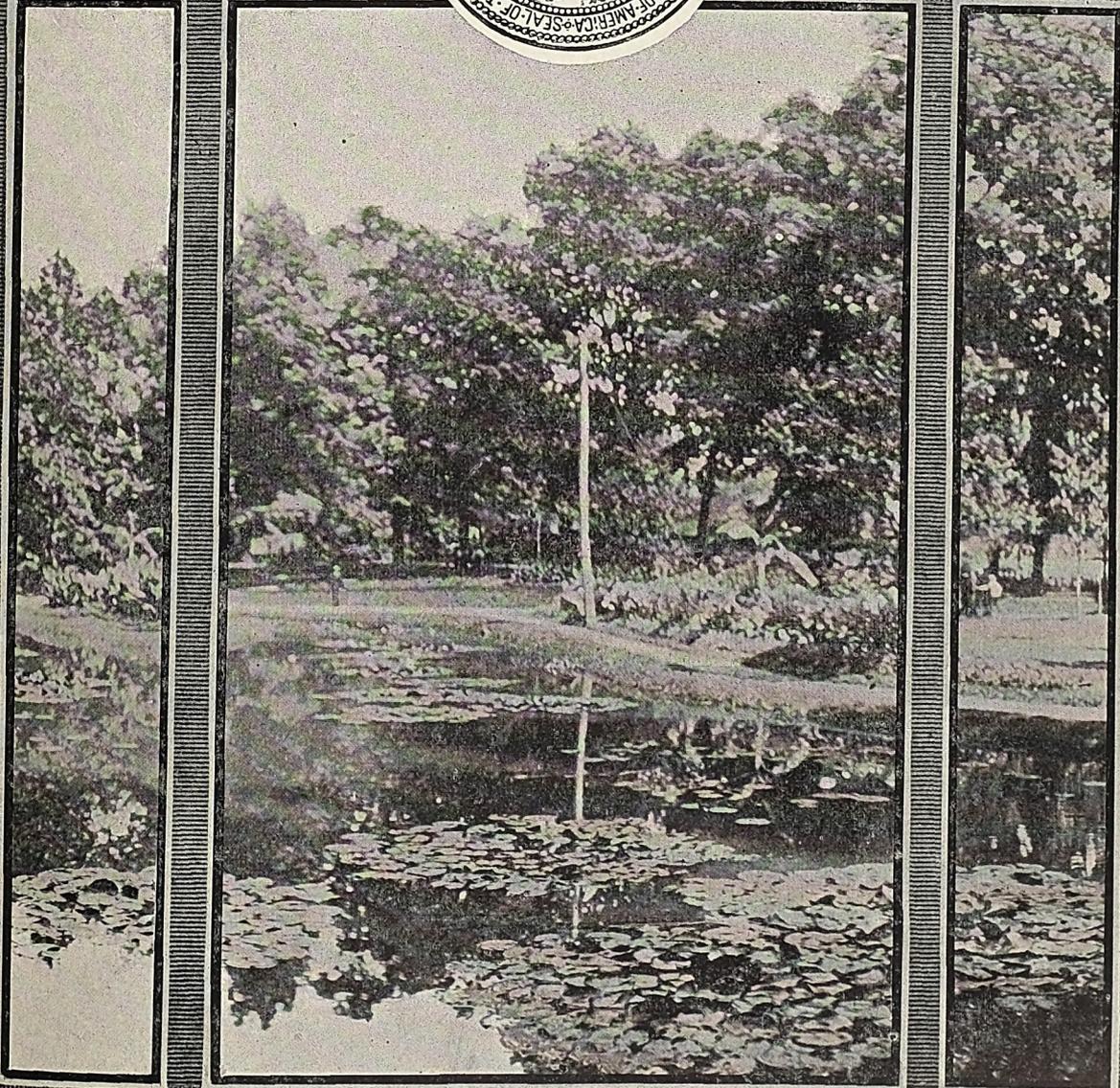
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1906

The Presbyterian



Christian Advocate and
Journal X



May 17, 1905

The Presbyterian

VOLUME 75

PHILADELPHIA, MAY 17, 1905

NUMBER 20

The Coming Assembly.

THE Assembly for 1905 meets at Winona, Ind., next Thursday, May 18. It will be opened with a sermon by the retiring Moderator, Rev. J. Addison Henry, D.D. His timely and practical discourse, by his courtesy, we lay before our readers in the present issue. It is worthy of perusal. It is not quite as long as the regulation order of moderator-sermons, but to most persons this will be more of a commendation than an objection. A discourse of forty-five minutes at such a time is far more popular and satisfactory than one of an hour and fifteen or twenty minutes. It takes an exceptional preacher, an exceptional theme, and an exceptional occasion to keep up a sustained interest in a body that comes together after the long strain of travel, hurry, and worry, while the reading public prefers more condensation and less elaboration. Dr. Henry belongs to the busy, working and spiritual order of preachers and has given the Church a summons to work in a ringing and earnest way at a time when the Lord of the harvest calls for the largest, finest and most persistent service.

The place, where the Assembly meets, is becoming more and more a Presbyterian centre. It is conveniently located. It is situated along a beautiful lake. It is noted for its summer gatherings for recreation, study and inspiration. Started as a Presbyterian enterprise for this purpose some ten years ago, it has grown in power, influence, and environment. Our General Assembly has met at Winona twice before, first in 1897, when Rev. Sheldon Jackson, D.D., LL.D., was moderator, and again in 1898, when Rev. Wallace Radcliffe, D.D., LL.D., occupied the chair. On these occasions much complaint was heard about the accommodations, but since the enlargement and beautification of the place there is a promise of more favorable conditions. We give in the present number some cuts of the scenes and buildings at this pleasant resort. The auditorium, in which the sessions of the Assembly will be held, is convenient and spacious.

It has been a source of personal gratification to the senior editor to find in the Rev. John C. Breckenridge, the kindly and energetic Secretary of the Hospitality Committee, one whom he baptized over forty years ago, the son of one of the parishioners of his early ministry, and the grandson, on both the paternal and maternal side, of two of the senior elders of the then existing session. This is another illustration of how the present and the past stand linked in personal life, association and interest.

The Assembly promises to be a more than usually important body. It will have before it a large amount of business to transact. Questions of large, vital and influential character will come up for consideration. Special reports will be made on such subjects as Fed-

eration of the Presbyterian Churches in the United States and a Liturgical Service. The union consummation will loom up big and momentous. It has degenerated into a question of whether it is to be postponed until more favorable circumstances, or to be prosecuted with a mere segment of a sister Church; whether it is to be determined by due regard to the integrity of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church or pushed in the face of a disrupted body and of a long and troublesome law suit.

Among other matters of special and general interest and importance are those relating to administration, benevolence, evangelism and missions, and it is to be hoped there will be ample time given for their judicious and careful consideration.

An Assembly, meeting under such circumstances and with such issues, calls for earnest and importunate prayer on the part of the Church. Wisdom and grace are needed in large measure by all who take part in the discussion and settlement of the varied and momentous business before it. The guidance of the Holy Spirit is imperatively required for the hour and the occasion. Let there be the praying Church back of the deliberating and deciding Assembly.

Princeton Theological Seminary Commencement.

THE ninety-third annual commencement of Princeton Theological Seminary was held May 7 to May 9. On Sabbath the baccalaureate sermon was preached in Miller Chapel by the Rev. Donald V. Guthrie, D.D., pastor of the First church of Baltimore, Md., a member of the Board of Directors. He took as his theme, "The Consecration of the Ministry and Its True Mission," dwelling with force and earnestness upon love, self-sacrifice and devotion as the animating and guiding characteristics of the Gospel herald, and urging particularly the necessity for holding up the Cross as the only message that can meet the deepest needs of human nature.

After the discourse came the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

On Monday the Board of Directors held its meeting, and transacted important business.

Tuesday opened bright, beautiful and invigorating, and proved an ideal day for the special services of the occasion. The trains brought hundreds of the friends and alumni of the seminary, and at the appointed hour, the chapel was filled with an interested and attentive audience. In the absence of Rev. Ethelbert D. Warfield, D. D., LL.D., president of the Board of Directors, on account of the serious illness of his wife, Mr. Silas B. Brownell, LL.D., presided. Rev. C. R. Erdman, D.D., read the Scriptures, and Rev. William Irwin, D.D., made the prayer. George E. Sterrey, Esq., of

The First Hymn-Book of Reformation Scotland.

By Professor Benjamin B. Warfield, D.D., LL.D.

IN his account of the martyrdom of George Wishart, John Knox tells us that on the night on which he was taken by his enemies, as he was about to retire, after edifying converse—"Thairwith," he said, 'Will we sing a Psalm?' And so he appointed the 51st Psalm, which was put in Scotishe meter, and began thus—

'Have mercy on me now, good Lord,
After thy great mercy, etc.'

From this it appears that already in 1546 the singing of Psalms in the vernacular was a customary solace of those of the new religion in Scotland. And this implies the wide circulation among them of vernacular versions of Psalms, either in broad-sheets or in volume form. Perhaps this is the earliest notice which implies so much as this, although corroborative testimony treads close upon its heels.

The Psalm which Wishart "appointed" to be sung on this affecting occasion actually occurs in what we may call the first Scottish Psalm and Hymn Book—the "Psalms and Spiritual Songs" of John Wedderburn, which in its most rudimentary state may well have been in book form by this time. But in the shape in which it has come down to us the lines adduced by Knox open the second, not the first stanza. The piece extends to no less than forty verses. The following partially modernized transcript of four of these will probably give a sufficiently clear idea of its quality:

"Have mercy on me, God of might,
Of mercy Lord and King;
For Thy mercy is set full right
Above all earthly thing.
Therefore I cry both day and night,
And with my heart shall sing:
To Thy mercy with Thee will I go.

Have mercy on me, O good Lord,
After Thy great mercy.
My sinful life does me remord,
Which sore has grievéd Thee:
But Thy great grace has me restored,
Through Christ, to liberty:
To Thy mercy with Thee will I go.

Only 'gainst Thee did I offence
And evil much have done:
For which, most obviously, defence
To me is none abone;
Thus men will judge Thy just vengeance
Has put me from my throne:
Yet to Thy mercy with Thee will I go.

Behold, Thou lovest Truth, good Lord,
Thou art the verity.
This well thy promise can record
Where Thou dost show to me,
The hid things of Thy godly word
That were unsure to me.
To Thy mercy with Thee will I go."

The versification, it will be observed, is rather notable for its elaborate scheme of rhymes—three lines rhyming together throughout; and for the refrain which accompanies each stanza. In both matters, however, it is surpassed by another old Scottish version of

the same Psalm of similar or perhaps even superior age. The corresponding stanzas of this fine piece, somewhat modernized, run as follows:

"Lord God, deliver me, alas!
Sore mourning, groveling on my face
For thy great mercy, ruth and grace
Pity my misery!
Hear for the multitude and space
Of Thy high clemency, my case,
And my trespass expell and chace,—
Lord God, deliver me!

Wash me and make my soul serene
From all iniquity that been;
Cleanse me of crime and make me clean,
All vices for to flee:
For my transgression have I seen
Which torments me with Tray and teen,
And aye my sin's before my e'en:
Lord God, deliver me!

'Gainst none but Thee did I offend;
Thou only canst my sin amend:
In Thy blest Word Thou art well kened
To all sin contrary:
In filth, lo! I begin and end,
With sin maternal hither tend
With vice I vanish and must wend,—
Lord God, deliver me!

Thou hast for truth so great a zeal,
That of Thy love, Thou didst reveal
Uncertain hid things for my weal
And laid before my e'e.
For when Thy force of grace I feel
I shall be cleansed as clean as steel,—
And whiter than the snow, great deal,—
Lord God, deliver me!"

One fancies that out of either of these earlier versions there could have been framed a more moving hymn of contrition and surrender than seventeenth century Scotland succeeded in making out of the English version of Francis Rouse, which as revised by the General Assembly has supplied the Scottish churches with its "allowed" version of the Fifty-first Psalm for the last two hundred and fifty years:

"After Thy loving-kindness, Lord,
have mercy upon me:
For Thy compassions great, blot out
all mine iniquity.
Me cleanse from sin, and throughly wash
from mine iniquity:
For my transgressions I confess,
My sin forever see.

'Gainst Thee, The only, have I sinned,
in Thy sight done this ill;
That when Thou speak'st Thou might'st be just,
and clear in judging still.
Behold, I in iniquity
was formed the womb within;
My mother also me conceived
in guiltiness and sin.

Behold, Thou in the inward parts
with truth delighted art;
And wisdom Thou shalt make me know
within the hidden part.
Do Thou with hyssop sprinkle me,
I shall be cleansed so;
Yea, wash me Thou, and then I shall
be whiter than the snow."

To return, however, to the earliest Psalm and Hymn Book of the Reformation in Scotland. It by no means consisted solely of versions of the Psalms. By their side are to be found also a very considerable number of hymns. They were largely inspired by German Protestant hymnology; and indeed a number of the Psalms owe something also to the contemporary German versions. There are also a number of satirical songs, which being set to popular tunes and indeed, in many cases, being themselves little more than parodies of popular secular songs, supplied in the mouth of the Protestant singer, a sharp and effective scourge to the corruptions and abuses of the Romish Church. A very good example of these satirical songs is that stirring ballad beginning:

"The Pope, that pagan full of pride,
He has us blinded long,
For when the blind the blind doth guide
No wonder both go wrong;
Like prince and king he led the reign
Of all iniquity:
Hay trix, tryme go trix, under the greenwood tree."

It is, however, in the properly so-called Psalms and hymns that the collection attains its height of value. It is even probable that the satirical pieces were no part of it in its first form. The distinctively spiritual pieces are naturally of varied merit; but they were on the whole a noble collection of sacred songs, and those that seem to be wholly original with Wedderburn do not yield in excellence to those which he has adapted from Continental originals. There is no Psalm in the earlier collection, for example, that is more nobly conceived and expressed than the 81st—for which no Continental original has been discovered. It opens thus:

"Who on the Highest will depend
And in His secret help will trust,
Almighty God will Him defend
And guide him with His Holy Ghost."

The following verses are (with some slight alterations) taken from one of the original hymns. This hymn is all the more characteristic of the alteration because it is a parody of a secular song. By an odd chance, moreover, the secular song has itself come down to us, and we are enabled to observe the precise method by which it has been turned into the hymn:

"Welcome, Lord Christ, welcome again
My joy, my comfort and my bliss,
That could me save from hell's dire pain
But only Thou, none was nor is.

Therefore I may right boldly say,
If Christ, He who has me redrest,
Be on my side,—He who did pay
My ransom—none can me molest.

O Christ, who now hast made me one
With God the Father, and didst die
To make me just, to heaven Thou'rt gone,
And reigneth evermore on high.

My part is then from sin to cease
And cleave to Christ, who has suppress
Sin, death and hell, and made my peace
Through faith in Him that I might rest."

As a specimen of the translations we select a well-

known Christmas hymn of Luther's, an English version of which, by Miss Winckworth, is to be found in the "Church Hymnary." As in the former cases, we have allowed ourselves considerable freedom in modernizing it:

"From heaven high I come to tell
The gladdest news that e'er befell,
To you these tidings true I bring
And I will of them say and sing.

This day to you is born a child
Of Mary meek and virgin mild;
That blessed child, benign and kind,
Shall you rejoice, both heart and mind.

It is the Lord Christ, God and man,
He will do for you what He can:
Himself your Savior will He be,
From sin and hell to make you free.

Let us rejoice then and be blithe
And with the shepherds go full swithe,
And see what God in grace has done
Through Christ to bring us to His throne.

My soul and life stand up and see
Who lieth in a crib for thee.
What babe is that so good and fair?
It is the Christ, God's Son and Heir.

O God that madest all creature,
How art Thou now become so poor
As on the hay and straw to lie
Among the asses and the kye?

O were the world ten times as wide,
And strewn with gold and stones of pride,
Unworthy it, compared to Thee,
Under Thy feet a stool to be.

O my dear heart, young Jesus sweet
Prepare Thy cradle in my spirit;
And I shall rock Thee in my heart,
And never more from Thee depart.

Praise be to God eternally
Who gave His only Son for me:
O world, the joyful tidings hear,—
The gracious gift of this New Year!"

Such was the first Psalm and Hymn Book of the Scottish Reformation. Meanwhile there was a Psalm Book preparing in Geneva and from 1561 this "Book of Geneva" became the "allowed" "Psalm Book" of the Church of Scotland. But the old Wedderburn book still retained its hold on the hearts of many, and editions of it were still printing almost up to the time when the "Geneva Psalter" itself was supplanted in the middle of the seventeenth century by the Assembly's revision of the version of Francis Rouse.

Come, Light Divine.

O Thou, whose power o'er moving worlds presides,
Whose voice created, and whose wisdom guides,
On darkling man in pure effulgence shine,
And cheer the clouded mind with light divine.

'Tis thine alone to calm the pious breast
With silent confidence and holy rest;
From thee, great God, we spring, to thee we tend,
Path, motive, guide, original and end!

—Dr. Johnson from the Latin.