

The Independent

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SURVEY OF THE WORLD.

The treaty which was signed at Paris will be referred in the Senate to the Committee on Foreign Relations, of which Mr. Davis (one of the Peace Commissioners) is chairman, and Mr. Frye, another Commissioner, is a member. It is said that the agreement will be reported promptly, without opposition, and that seventy-one votes in the Senate can already be counted for ratification. Probably there will be an attempt to obtain the passage of a resolution declaring that it is the purpose of the Government to hold the Philippines by military power only until the inhabitants shall be able to set up a stable government of their own. Mr. Bryan expresses the opinion that the treaty should be ratified and that then our Government should treat the Filipinos as it intends to treat the people of Cuba. Those who oppose expansion may agree in support of such a policy, but they appear to be outnumbered greatly by those who are unwilling at present to bind the Government to any clearly defined course of action. Senator Frye has been interviewed on this subject. He argues that it would be folly to turn over the islands to any other power; that we are under a moral obligation to hold them and give them good government, and that the commercial advantages to be gained by holding them will be very great. The following remarks of the Senator have excited much favorable comment: "If we give them a good government there will be little difficulty. We must not send carpet-baggers and political hacks and adventurers there to govern these people." The drift in labor organizations is in opposition to a policy of expansion. To the recent adverse vote of the Federation of Labor have now been added sim-

ilar votes in the Central Labor Unions of New York and Boston. Agoncillo has returned from Paris to Washington, where, with the assistance of three additional commissioners—Gen. Diego de Dios, Dr. Lozada and Señor Juan Luna—he will establish a Filipino Junta.

Cuba Transferred.

Spain's sovereignty in Cuba and on the whole Western Continent which she once dominated ended at noon on Sunday, January 1st. It was an impressive scene, not only in the salon of the Palace, where the transfer was formally made, but in the Plaza of Arms, where the people gathered in crowds to witness the Spanish ensign descend from Morro Castle, giving place to the Stars and Stripes. The Spaniards did not raise the Palace flag at all, evidently feeling that there was humiliation enough for them. In the salon General Castellanos with his suit, in fatigue dress with no decoration, met General Brooke and his staff, resplendent in full uniform. After a little informal talk both groups formed a crescent, behind which stood a group of Cuban insurgent officers. When the salute from Cabanas and the Spanish ships in the harbor indicated that the hour had come, General Castellanos stepped forward and addressed himself in Spanish to General Wade as President of the American Commission, and was followed by a translation by Captain Hart. The Spaniard spoke with deep feeling, and emphasized the fact that he was obeying the command of his King and the dictates of the Treaty of Paris. General Wade turned to General Brooke, asking him to receive the sovereignty yielded up by Spain, and he in turn spoke briefly,

peans and Americans are expected at the Council, having been appointed thereto by their Churches, and in addition there will be representatives from Japan, China, Australia, Persia, South Africa and other parts of the world. The presiding officer will be J. Marshall Lang, D.D., pastor of the Barony Church, Glasgow, Scotland. The chairman of the Committee of Arrangements is Wallace Radcliffe, D.D., pastor of the New York Avenue Church, Washington, D. C., and at present Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

In the intervals between the General Councils the affairs of the Alliance are conducted by the Executive Commission. The American Branch of that body held two interesting and profitable meetings this year, the first in April at Philadelphia, as the guest of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., and the second at St. Louis, Mo., in October, where the host was the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. The next meeting of the Commission has been appointed for Richmond, Va., and the host will be the Presbyterian Church, South.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

THE NORTHERN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

BY WM. HENRY ROBERTS, D.D., LL.D.,
STATED CLERK.

THE Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. during the year 1898 has made only fair progress. It had been hoped that the cessation of controversy would have resulted in decided gains spiritually and financially. But this has not been the result. The total of additions upon confession of faith in 1897-98, 57,041, was just 30 above the additions of the year 1896-97, and 17,785 less than in the year 1893-94. The total of actual contributions to the Boards, \$2,407,361, was \$12,919 less than the preceding year. The Board of Foreign Missions, fortunately, came to the Assembly of 1898 without debt, but the Board of Home Missions reported an increase of indebtedness of \$20,000, or an aggregate of \$167,839. The debt of the Board of Education was reported as being \$7,720, and of the Board of Missions for Freedmen

\$57,477. The other five boards kept within their incomes. There was a time when the leverage of a debt was believed to be essential to the success of a missionary Board, but that method of raising funds in the Presbyterian Church is no longer acceptable or profitable. It is to be hoped that the Church will clear away the indebtedness of the Home Board, for which object some \$50,000 has been already given, and also the heavy incumbrance upon the work among the Freedmen.

The consolidation of *The Assembly Herald* and *The Church at Home and Abroad*, ordered by the last Assembly, has been accomplished. The office of the new magazine, which bears the name *The Assembly Herald*, is at 156 Fifth avenue, N. Y. City. The Rev. Wm. H. Hubbard, editor of the old *Assembly Herald*, has not accepted the position of editor of the new magazine, to which he was chosen by the Assembly, and for the time being the committee in charge is assisted in the production of the magazine by the Rev. Albert B. Robinson. Mr. Robinson has earned the thanks of the Church by the admirable manner in which he performed for two years the duties of editor of *The Church at Home and Abroad*.

The attention of the last Assembly was called to a book by Prof. Arthur C. McGiffert, entitled "Christianity in the Apostolic Age." The Assembly, by virtue of its power to criticize a book without arraigning the author as a heretic, made a deliverance which in part was as follows: "The General Assembly deplores the renewal of controversy occasioned by the publication of this book at a time when our recent divisions were scarcely healed. It sympathizes with the widespread belief that the utterances of Dr. McGiffert are inconsistent with the teachings of Scripture as interpreted by the Presbyterian Church and by evangelical Christendom. The Assembly, therefore, in the spirit of kindness no less than in devotion to the truth, counsels Dr. McGiffert to reconsider the questionable views set forth in his book, and if he cannot conform his book with the standards of our Church, then peaceably to withdraw from the Presbyterian ministry." Broadly stated, this action of the Assembly means

that the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. is a Confessional, not a Comprehensive, Church. It is a Church with a creed, and requires that its ministers and other officers shall be loyal thereto.

In the connection just stated, it is of importance as showing the trend of thought in the Church that the Assembly authorized the Board of Foreign Missions to put to candidates for missionary appointments, when they are laymen or women, the questions required to be asked of ministers at ordination, with the additional question: "Have you any views at variance with these doctrines, or any views of Church government which would prevent your cordial co-operation with the missionaries of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.?"

The Presbyteries and the General Assembly, acting conjointly under the constitution, adopted a new section of Chapter 9 of the Form of Government, by which the worship of the congregation, including the musical service, has been formally placed under the control of the Session, and also the determination of the uses to which church buildings may be put. This is the definite and appropriate ending of the controversy as between the rights of Boards of Trustees and the powers of Church Sessions. Trustees are hereafter to be limited to the jurisdiction which belongs to them by the civil law, the care of church buildings and the management of church funds. The vote in favor of the change was 180 Presbyteries in the affirmative to 11 in the negative.

At the last General Assembly the 250th anniversary of the Westminster Assembly of Divines was celebrated. An entire day was devoted thereto, sessions being held morning, afternoon and evening. All parties in the Church were represented among the speakers, and the addresses have been issued in a volume by the Presbyterian Board of Publication. The celebration in all its features is one of the many evidences that Calvinism as a system of thought and practice is still a mighty force in the world. The persons who imagine that it is either moribund or dead simply exhibit their own narrowness both of thought and view.

Among the ministers who have died during the year we notice Wm. C. Cattell, D.D., LL.D., recently secretary of the Board of Ministerial Relief; Gilbert T. Woodhull, D.D., professor in Lincoln University; Samuel A. Muchmore, D.D., for many years editor of *The Presbyterian*, and John Hall, D.D., LL.D., pastor of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York.

But one *ad interim* committee was appointed by the last General Assembly, that on the subject of reduced representation, with J. F. Patterson, D.D., of Orange, N. J., as chairman. This committee was occasioned by the growing size of the Assembly.

The Presbyterian Church has been in thorough sympathy with the war for the liberation of Cuba, just brought to a successful close by the United States. The Missionary Boards are already planning work in the new territories, over which for centuries secular and ecclesiastical tyranny have spread a pall of ignorance, poverty and superstition.

The official secretariat has been changed during the year only in connection with the Board of Home Missions, Chas. L. Thompson, D.D., having been elected secretary in place of Wm. Charles Roberts, D.D., and D. J. McMillan, D.D., resigned. John Dixon, D.D., has been associated with Dr. Thompson as assistant secretary, and the Rev. D. Stuart Dodge has been elected in the place of Dr. John Hall as president.

The outlook for the year 1899 is better than for the year closing, with more favorable financial prospects and with the noon-tide of peace both in Church and State. Assuredly great results may be expected from the work of a Church which has 7,190 ministers, 7,635 churches, 8 missionary and benevolent boards, 14 theological seminaries and 4,177 missionaries and missionary teachers, half of them in foreign lands. Further, a Church which raised nearly \$14,000,000 for congregational expenses and missionary purposes during the last fiscal year should be able to increase largely its gifts during the closing year of the century. The Methodists have put their mark at \$20,000,000, what will the Presbyterians do?

PHILADELPHIA, PA.