

Closing Exercises.

Wednesday evening, April 6th, the closing exercises for session 1880-81 were held in Crescent Street Church, before an unusually large audience. The proceedings commenced by the singing of the 165th hymn, and prayer by the Rev. W. McKibbin, B.A., '75. Then followed the presentation of prizemen, scholars and medallist, in the order of the appended list.

Mr. David Morrice, in making the presentation of the gold medal to Mr. Mitchell, said they had reason to be gratified at the position the College now occupied in view of the small beginning twelve years ago. Seventy graduates had left its halls, and there were thirty students now in the College who would be engaged in mission work during the holidays, while the graduates were now labouring in different parts of the country. But there was yet much to be done to make the College as efficient as it should be. They had at present two professors and a lecturer. To accomplish their work they should have at least a staff of five professors. There should be a chair of systematic theology and homiletics, a chair for church history, a chair for apologetics, one for exegesis, and one for biblical literature, not to mention the teaching of the French language, which was an important feature of the College work. These chairs should be all well endowed. Another matter for consideration was the library. There was now ample accommodation for books, and friends of the institution could help them to place on the shelves all modern works of value. The creation of two or three fellowships at \$500 or \$600 a year, to give graduates an extra year's study here or elsewhere, was desirable, and would meet such a case as that of Mr. Mitchell, the gold medallist, who had determined to study for another year.

Mr. G. D. Bayne, B.A., delivered the valedictory, in the course whereof he said:—

The members of the class of '81 meet together to-night, as a unit, for the last time. For seven years we have toiled together up the rugged steeps. We have been bound by a common purpose. From our common labours and hopes now blossoming to fruition; from our mutual difficulties and dangers, our joys and sorrows—nay, from our very rivalries,—have sprung into life warm, imperishable friendships, which shall stand the test of the rudest storms. But the stream of time which has borne us along together, and finds us in the closest union to-night, is soon to separate us more widely than ever.

Brothers in toil and hope, the importance and responsibility of our high calling appeal to us to-night in accents loud and earnest. They demand the earnest consecration of all our powers and attainments. No nobler calling can enlist the zeal and energy of mortal man. The path of duty may lead up rugged steeps, over stormy ways. The call to arms may be a call to danger or to death. The call of duty must be obeyed, the path of

duty we must follow, whatever may be the result. When Kossuth led his Magyars to the walls of Vienna, he called a halt and addressed them:—"Here before you lie two paths; the one the path of ease and safety, but ultimately of servitude; the other the path of duty, but of danger and, probably, of death. Which do you choose?" With a cry that rent the heavens, and shook the earth, they said, "We choose the path of duty!" In like manner are we called to duty. Our years of toil, important though they be to us, are but means to a still more important end. The great work that is to absorb all our powers is but opening up before us. Let us demonstrate to this utilitarian age that we are resolved to be useful in our day and generation. The necessities of a ruined world cry to us for light and sympathy and help. Forgetting the discouragements of the past, we must now, with redoubled energy, address ourselves to that great work, on whose threshold we have for a few years been standing.

We go forth as defenders of the faith. Apology is not the chief business of the Christian minister. We may not be called to act in the arena of polemics. But, firmly persuaded in our own minds, we are to be prepared for any assault. The Christian religion has always had defenders; it has always met with opposition. In Judæa Christianity came into collision with a conservative religion. In Greece and Rome it conflicted with polytheism, with priestly power, with the state, with philosophy. In the middle ages it encountered the blackness of darkness. Later on, its defenders were called to battle against atheism, deism, pantheism and rationalism. Many of these conflicts have ceased forever. They have gone into the extinct controversies of the past, and are not to be renewed. We have fallen upon later times. The defender of the Christian religion to-day has a different work to do from what he had in the days of Celsus and Porphyry; in the days of Morgan and Chubb; in the time of Volney, Gibbon and Hume. The old modes of attacking the Bible are either abandoned or changed into modern forms. The attacks are from new quarters, and with new weapons; the questions involved are deeper than any with which the church has heretofore grappled; the results of the conflict may be final. A more subtle pantheism underlies the positivism and rationalism of the present day than what has hitherto appeared on the stage of this world. Men are offering Agnosticism and refined materialism as substitutes for Christianity. An insidious and dangerous scepticism is taking root in many quarters. There is with many a tendency to regard everything as an open question. Thus the sacred truths which we have been in the habit of considering as settled questions, and from which we have often taken our bearings when cast on the sea of doubt, are thrown into the crucible and treated with disrespect, and even contempt. To all these forces of the enemy the Christian ministry must present an unbroken front. We must neither tremble nor turn aside. This is a living age; an inquisitive, progressive age. Theologians