

But, if there is need for such hints, they may be much more useful, though less grateful, than indiscriminate eulogy.

We would, then, venture to suggest that, as the Alliance is now fairly launched, and its work and scope well understood, somewhat less frequent meetings of the council might suffice. It seems to us, in view of the time and the expense required for such a gathering, a meeting once in five, or even ten, years might probably be enough for all practical ends.

The custom of changing the presiding officer from session to session of the council has obvious advantages in a body where so many churches are represented. It scatters the honors of the occasion more widely, and gives an opportunity of bringing forward men worthy of any mark of distinction put upon them. It is not, however, without serious drawbacks. The gentlemen selected did, no doubt, generally discharge their duties well; but we think that at the last council it was, on more than one occasion, apparent that the business committee had chosen the chairman without much knowledge of his special aptitude for the work entrusted to him. An unsuitable presiding officer is a serious evil in an ordinary church court, where there are other officers and prominent men who are looked to for aid to guide the ship in dangerous navigation. In a body of the peculiar composition of the council, where the members are constantly changing, and are only slightly known to each other, these rectifying influences are less available. If the present system is continued, special care would need to be taken to select men who can preside effectively, and are able to make themselves distinctly heard in a large audience-room.

It is admitted, on all hands, that the programme was too much crowded. There were too many papers read, and too little time left for the members to discuss them. This evil seems indeed to be chronic in the councils of the Alliance, and it should be recognized as due, largely, to the composition of the body. Where so many distinct organizations are represented, a laudable desire is felt to give each of them a place on the programme, and to give to the larger churches a fuller representation. The result is that so many papers are crowded in that they require nearly all the time which is not occupied in routine business. This evil was so fully recognized at the late council that a remedy