

Contributions.

In September Woods.

PETER ANDERSON.

O God! thy woods are wondrous fair
On such a day as this;
The beaming sun, the balmy air,
The whispering leaves, all breathe a
prayer,
Or sing a psalm of peace.

Old forest, full of sighs and cries,
Reveal what thou hast seen;
Break thine eternal silences,
And tell unto the world that is
The things that once have been.

Old friend of mine, it may not be;
Yet perchance to thee is given,
And in communion close with thee,
Thou hast whispered unto me
The very peace of heaven.

Sweet wildwood plants, that through
the hours
Of summer's golden days,
In all the fragrant forest bowers,
"With blooming—fading—faded—
flowers,"
Filled every sylvan maze,

Although your lives so bright and brief
Are fading fast away,
To you the "sere and yellow leaf"
Shall bring no touch of pain or grief,
And death no dark decay.

Such death to you can never come;
Your dying breath to-day
Fills all the air with faint perfume,
As grateful as your brightest bloom
Brought to the bowers of May;

While last year's leaves of faded brown
On Earth's warm, loving breast,
Are Nature's breezy beds of down,
On which she lays her darlings down
To their eternal rest.

O'd forest, that so proudly towers,
As if the clouds to meet;
Your day at last shall end—like ours;
You, too, shall lie, low as the flowers
That fade around your feet.

O Death! thy long-unbroken night
Still claims us, every one;
All hopeless still, without the light
Of that celestial city bright,
Where they shall need no sun.

My Experience of the Theatre.

It is a very limited one, considering that my first visit to that place of amusement was also my last, and in all probability will remain that way.

The play that I went to see, in the company of a small party of young relatives, was "Rip Van Winkle." I suppose one of the most harmless and innocent plays ever acted before a public audience, although, of course, it had a good many side accompaniments and embellishments not to be found in the original story.

It was a beautiful moonlight winter night, and as we started in the direction of the "Grand," I exhibited my ignorance of city ways by inquiring where all the people were going, not thinking that such crowds upon crowds of people, who came streaming from the east and the west and from the north and the south, could be all bent on the same foolish errand as ourselves.

To see such a number and variety of people coming from all directions, and all pressing eagerly forward to one central point, looked as if there were going to be some topic discussed that would be of great benefit to mankind, such as the total extermination of the liquor traffic, or some new method of preventing strikes and dissatisfaction among the laboring men, but it was rather humiliating to think that there was no other object in view but the selfish gratification of the senses for a few hours.

The house was filled with a mixed audience. They were there, from the bejewelled lady with her bland and smiling escort, to the lads in the highest gallery, who looked ill-salaried and indifferently clad, and whose highest ambition appeared to me to be just to

eke out a scant living, and feel quite happy if at the close of each day they could raise enough of their hard-earned wages to take them to see the play. No thought of striving for a higher education, so as to be fitted for a better position in life, nor of laying up something to by and by make themselves a comfortable little home.

The influence of the theatre is bad, in that it so often makes virtue and innocence appear so very unlovely and grotesque, that you can hardly feel in sympathy with them; and the very opposites to appear so winning and humorous, that you are made to feel that they are not so very bad after all.

As the play advanced, I found to my surprise that my own sympathies were going out toward the good-natured, jovial, but dissipated Rip, instead of being enlisted on the side of his shrill-voiced, vixenish, but much abused and much to be pitied wife. And I found myself shedding a few quiet tears, as, after taking a touching farewell of his little daughter, he was driven out into the darkness and storm of a most tempestuous night, to wander off with his dog and gun to the mountains to lie down to his twenty years of unbroken slumber.

Another indication that the influence of the theatre is demoralizing is, that it takes such a tyrannical and overmastering hold on the minds and feelings of its devotees, fully as much so as tobacco-chewing and smoking, drinking, card-playing, dancing, and horse-racing, on their devotees. And who in their calmer moments would advocate any of these, or maintain that they are right?

Had any one called upon us the next morning, soliciting aid for some charitable purpose, and we had given just half of what our theatre tickets cost the night before, we would no doubt have felt very complaisant and self-laudatory, and have thought that we deserved great credit for our generosity. Some of us may not have much to spend, but let us spend it in a way that will not make us ashamed when we have to give an account of the deeds done in the flesh.

I will venture the assertion that if all the money that has been worse than uselessly spent by Christian nations in this one amusement, from the beginning of this century to the present time, had been employed to Christianize the heathen nations; that from millions of happy hearts in China and Japan, prayers of thanksgiving would now be ascending to the throne, and the jungles of India and waste places of Africa would be re-echoing the songs of Zion.

I cannot comprehend how consistent Christian men or women who love the fellowship of the good and pure here, and hope to enjoy the society of the pure and holy in the home eternal, can spend their time and means in theatre going. Can you?

W. A. S.

Prayer for Patience.

EMMA CRIPPS.

Let me not murmur or complain,
Though pressed on every side.
But look to Thee, who once was slain,
Who wept, and bled, and died.

Make me to see, and feel, and know,
Thy tender patience, Lord,
For they who saw Thee when below,
No fretful murmur heard.

O make me kind and gentle too,
Though sorrows be my share,
Content with what I find to do,
Meekly my cross to bear.

For Thou hast suffered much for me,
Then let me not complain,
But firm in faith look up to Thee,
Blest Lamb who once was slain.
Hamilton.

Selections.

Some Things the Pan-Presbyterian Council did not do.

BY KNOXIAN.

There will be no lack of people to say that the meeting of the Pan-Presbyterian Council was the greatest ecclesiastical event that ever took place in this country. It "drew," and in these modern days anything that draws is supposed to be good. As a matter of fact, some of the addresses delivered at the Alliance Meeting were commonplace, and a few did not rise even to decent mediocrity. It could not well be otherwise. The number of addresses was large, and the proportion of comparative failures always increases with the number. Besides trying to discuss the Reformation, or the Labor question, or the Liquor question, or any other great question in twenty minutes is like trying to run the waters of Lake Ontario through a goose quill. There is only one thing more absurd than trying to discuss a great problem in a twenty minute paper, and that is bringing a man from the other side of the globe to deliver a twenty-minute address and then putting him down if he speaks twenty-one minutes and three seconds. It seems rather hard to refuse a man a few additional minutes in which to finish his piece after he has come all the way from Syria or Japan, Africa or Australia to speak it, but no doubt it is all right. Some ministers would never stop talking if somebody did not shut off the sluice.

No doubt some excellent people believe that the Alliance meeting did a vast amount of good, and are ready to predict that it will do a great deal more. So may it be. The Presbyterian Church, like every other, can stand considerable improvement without seriously endangering our theory in regard to sinless perfection. We need all the good we can get out of an Alliance or any other meeting. But whilst hoping that the best results may flow from the great gathering, it may be well to remember that there are a few things which even a Pan-Presbyterian Council cannot do. Whilst other pens may tell the world that the meeting is to bring in the millennium by leaps and bounds, be it the humble duty of this column to remind people that the millennium is not quite here, and that several council meetings may have to be held before it comes.

There are several things that a meeting of the Pan-Presbyterian Council cannot do for a man, even if he attends all its sessions. For example it cannot give him

BRAINS.

No doubt brain abounded in the Council. Anybody with half an eye could see that. There were many able men there, men who could hold their own in any company in any part of the world. But the brainiest of them neither could nor would spare any brain for a brainless brother. No doubt, any of them would be willing to give a weak brother advice or anything of that kind, but the best of them would not care to part with brain power, even if that power could be passed from one head to another, which it cannot. It is to be feared that the Council could not give a man

COMMON SENSE.

Had the Council this power its existence would be one of the greatest blessings of the nineteenth century. No doubt the Council has a vast store-house of common sense itself. The way in which it manages its business and steers around some difficult points proves that it is a pre-eminently sensible body, but common sense is an incommuni-

cable kind of thing. A man may have a generous share of common sense himself and not be able to impart any portion of it to others. That is one reason, no doubt, why Solomon's son, Rehoboam, was a fool. Had the old king been able to put any sense into Rehoboam, no doubt he would have done so and have saved the kingdom from being wrecked. There is a remote possibility that a man, yes, even a minister, might attend all the meetings of a Pan-Presbyterian Council and have no more sense at the end of the meeting than he had at the beginning. In fact it is a rather nice question whether any power short of the miraculous can give a man common sense. Grace certainly does not. Grace saves and sanctifies what it finds. If it finds a man a crank it turns him into a Christian crank, but he remains cranky; though, perhaps, not quite so cranky as before. If it finds a man's head soft, his head remains soft, though his heart has been changed. If it finds him without natural ability, he remains rather weak in the upper storey. If it finds him a fool, he is likely to remain foolish, though his folly may not be so dangerous as it would have been if grace had never found him. Well, if grace, even invincible grace, cannot give a man common sense, a Pan-Presbyterian Council cannot be expected to help him much in that line.

THE WORKING POWER

of the Church may be increased a little by the meeting of the Alliance, but not to any great extent. The real workers will always go on as best they can, Alliance or no Alliance. A few people always put on a little spurt after a great demonstration, but spurts and spurters never accomplish much good. The only worker who can be depended on is one who feels the power of this excellent text: "The love of Christ constraineth us."

No rational man expects that the meeting of the Alliance will

ABOLISH SIN

in Toronto and its vicinity. The members of that great and learned body never professed to be able to do anything of the kind. Travelling evangelists and their admirers sometimes boast that they have pretty nearly driven all the sin out of a place, but men like Dr. Blaikie and John Hall never speak in that way. They know that sin is a terrible power, and that it is entrenched with terrible firmness. Nor has the Alliance solved

ALL THE PROBLEMS

that are disturbing society and hindering the progress of the Church. The labor question and the drink question and a dozen other burning questions are still here and will never be settled until they are settled right—that is, by the power of the Gospel. Nor did the Alliance devise any means by which

CARELESS MEN

may be brought to Church. You must first go for them and bring them if they are to come at all. Nor did the Alliance suggest any new way for raising money. The right way is to put your hand into your pocket and take the money out. To do this in the right spirit and to the right extent, one's heart must be touched by divine power.

No doubt the Alliance meeting was a good enough thing. It may in some respects have been a great thing, but individual work must still be done by individual men, as if no Alliance meeting had ever been held. It is quite easy to attach too much importance to big demonstrations. After the last speech has been delivered, the last hymn sung and the last amen pronounced, our Master's work must be done by individual men.—*Canada Presbyterian.*

Disciples' Church Dedicated.

The Disciples re-opened and dedicated their church building at the head of Wesleyan street on Sunday last. The building, which was occupied by the Wesleyan Methodists before the union, and which was afterwards used as a hosiery, was recently purchased by the Disciples and having been attractively refitted, was on Sunday declared set apart for divine worship. The gentleman chosen to conduct the dedication services was Rev. L. L. Carpenter, the eloquent state evangelist of Indiana who works in connection with the Disciple body. He preached in the morning; Dr. Leonard in the afternoon and Mr. Carpenter again in the evening. At each service there was a large attendance. In the evening it was difficult to secure even standing room. A choir of singers led by Mr. W. Wilson, took charge of the music and besides the usual hymns, sang well several anthems during the day. At the morning and afternoon meetings, appeals (after the American fashion) were made by Mr. Carpenter, for subscriptions for the wiping off of a debt of \$1,650 resting upon the building. Seven pledges of \$100 each were given and, with smaller sums and collections, the amount by evening had exceeded \$1000 somewhat, leaving the debt not much over \$600.

The hymns and scriptures in the evening were nicely read by Mr. Amos Tovel, of Everton; and Dr. Leonard, of London, engaged in prayer. While Mr. Carpenter preached, Bro. Leonard sat at his left and chimed in with an "Amen," "Praise God," "That's what's the matter," according as the spirit moved him.

Mr. Monroe, editor of the EVANGELIST also took part in the day's services. [This is a mistake, Bro. Herald. The editor of the EVANGELIST was not present. It was his brother, John Munro, B. A., of Toronto University.—EDITOR EVANGELIST.]

Mr. Carpenter's text was: "What think ye of Christ?" He was not going to discuss the sonship of Christ. He took it for granted that no one in the audience doubted either his sonship or his divinity. Religion is no use unless it acknowledges this. "What think ye of Christ?" This is the question of the age. It comes from Christ himself. Everyone has to answer this. Better do it right and now. We can make a mistake as to how we vote on political questions, but if we make a mistake in answering this question, eternity will be too short to rectify the mistake. The speaker then paid a compliment to the Bible when he said that the history of the past 2000 years would be a blank without it. The men who wrote the Bible told the whole truth. If Noah got drunk they did not conceal the fact. If Abraham told a 3-cornered lie, it was put upon record. If orators want to adorn a speech, they quote from the Bible. But the central figure of the whole, and without Him it would be no use so far as salvation is concerned, is the once-crucified but now risen and exalted Christ. It is Christ in promise, Christ in type, Christ all the way through. "In the Bible there are 259 names applied to the Son of God. Every name has the idea of salvation rapt up in it! A thousand hallelujahs to His precious name!" The salvation of Christ doesn't bring anyone down. It lifts both rich and poor up. Christ was the greatest teacher that ever lived. Such men as Dick and Franklin have left it upon record that they only knew the A B C of what Christ knew. Paine, Hume, Voltaire, Bolingbroke and Ingersoll will say that the morality taught by Christ was superior to any other system. All the civilized world acknowledges Him to be King of Kings and Lord of